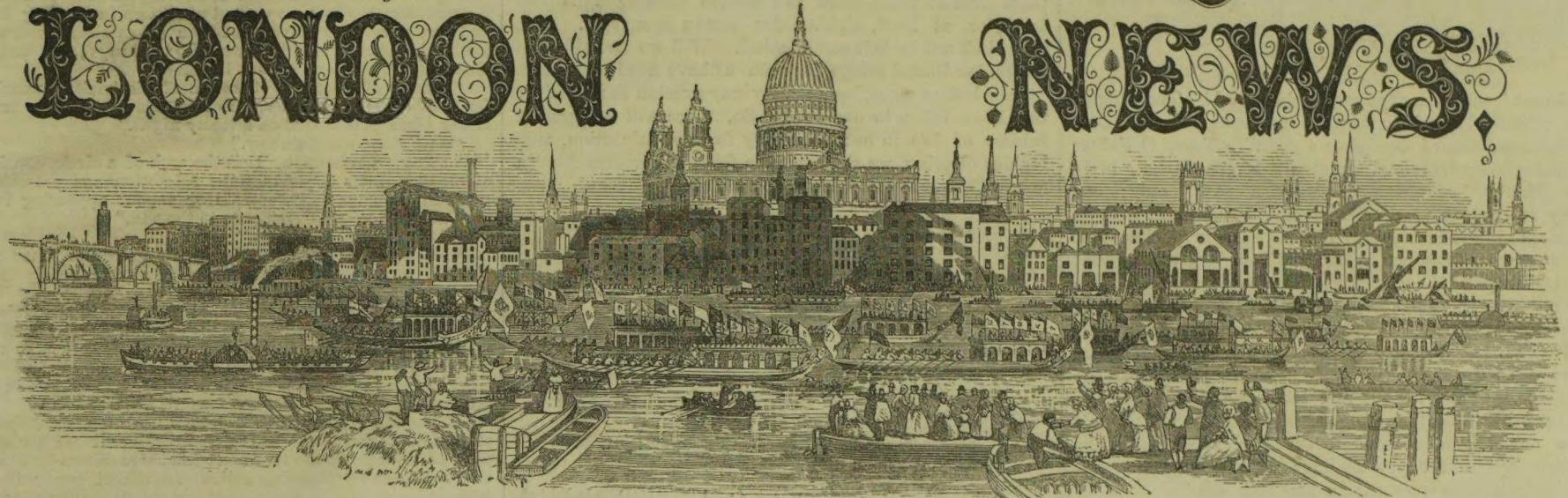


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"POUR LES BLESSÉS:" A SCENE AT LYONS.—DRAWN BY F. BARNARD.



Welcome! welcome once more, old friend! The song of our childhood used to impress upon us the fact that "Christmas comes but once a year." True, O Father with the hoary locks and the gleeful eye, and the "lusty but kindly" countenance! "once a year" only; but every succeeding year thou seemest to be back with us more speedily than before, and this year the quickness of thy return surprises us in the midst of many plans that we had hoped to get accomplished before seeing thee again. But for all that we lovingly greet thee, good "Father Christmas." Gladly we put aside our labours and our cares to prepare for thy presence, and offer homage at thy shrine, decked with the holly and the mistletoe. Come, friends all; let us be merry, and exchange with each other the good wishes of the season, and open our hearts, without a shade of reserve, to the smiling joys and happy feelings which Christmas profusely distributes among them that love him!

Can we not take leave of our anxieties and regrets, and burdens of responsibility, and our sorrowful retrospections, for a brief while?—ah! it will be but too brief, we are sure—and sun our spirits in the light of the influences which are radiated by Christmastide? Here, children, here is meet work for you—work, too, in which you will delight! Make ready, with your best holiday spirits, and your freshest faces, and your rollicking laughter, and your juvenile tricks, to clear away from the bosoms of your elders all the litters and traces of gloominess, which are within your reach (and are not wholly beyond your ken), and then take your reward in Christmas cheer! Oh, the children! God bless them! what would the festival be without them? Undimmed, unspoiled, crystalline humanity! what a bright, sparkling, enchanting thing it is! and what a perfect mirror does it make to bring back to us the image of what we have been! Come, little ones! we begin our rites with you. A kiss!—a score of kisses!—with little arms round our necks, and lo! there is a transformation for awhile, so that it is with all the faith and earnestness of childhood we pray for you, in return for the cleansing and healing efficacy of your affectionate natures, "A merry Christmas and a happy New Year!"

Pass we on to such as have reached the dignity of "the young people"—the brothers, and sisters, and cousins—the friends and sweethearts—most of whom have made some acquaintance with restraint, self-imposed or imposed from without, and have come home from school or business to let their yet young sympathies intermingle, and commune, and kindle round about the dear family hearth. Ay! surely are they welcome to the domestic reunion; none more so. With what wistful interest, rising from satisfaction, through admiration, to pride, will the older folk witness their deep and fervid enjoyment of the blessings of the festival, and especially their renewal of the home ties—the tendrils by which young hearts lovingly bind themselves unto a common centre of affection and attraction, until marriage, or misfortune, or misconduct, or death detach them. The compliments of the season, unstained as morning flowers, be to you also, young friends—merriment for the coming day, happiness for the coming year!

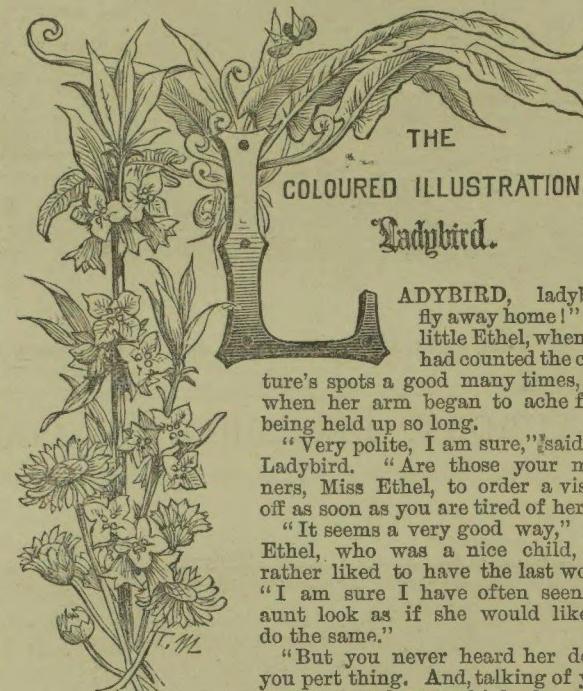
Christmas has his appropriate gifts for those who have toiled on to the meridian of life and have borne much of the burden and the heat of the day. Repose and dignity, faith and patience, a grateful appreciation of "thus far," and a submissive, trustful outlook beyond—these are for the mature of age on earth. Their treasures are not wholly in the past; hope still brightens their lot, and love beautifies it. Christmas, in passing over them, brushes away, even though it be but for a short interval, the anxious and troubous thoughts which settle upon their hearts like dust; and to themselves as well as to their loved ones they seem young again.

And the aged—have not they, too, a share in the revels of the season? Verily, have they. What if it be a quiet one, which finds its chief delight in retrospection, and wherein "'tis distance lends enchantment to the view"? Even "the pleasures of memory" have their special fascination, and the periodical occasions on which they return are welcome to the pilgrim approaching the natural term of life. They are shadows, no doubt; but shadows which have a world of significance in them. They are both illustrative and prophetic—images of times long gone by, having matters suggestive of the better things to come. Grandparents! here are seats for you at the festive board.

Oh! that a wish of ours could give a merry Christmas and a happy New Year to the whole family of man! We had hoped, even against hope, that the annual festival which commemorates the birthday of the Prince of Peace would have found the terrible conflict between our neighbours at an end. What myriads of hearts there are which will yearn for home this day, ay, even to fainting, but will be prevented from realising their desire by the stern demands of war. Let us give them a sympathising thought. Let us lift up on their behalf a silent prayer!

May their terrible work be soon concluded, and may it be the last of the kind which Europe will ever be called to witness!

We need not look across the seas, however, for objects of compassionate goodwill. There are throngs of them close at hand—men and women needing a helping hand, or, at least, sighing for human sympathy. No; they shall not be left out of mind. Will we not all of us devise our liberal things for such as have need, that, like "grace before meat," our charity may sweeten the blessings that have fallen to our lot? So, there will be greater fulness of life in our customary form of salutation, and, besides uttering, we shall help to fulfil our wishes for "a merry Christmas and a happy New Year."



LADYBIRD, ladybird, fly away home!" said little Ethel, when she had counted the creature's spots a good many times, and when her arm began to ache from being held up so long.

"Very polite, I am sure," said the Ladybird. "Are those your manners, Miss Ethel, to order a visitor off as soon as you are tired of her?"

"It seems a very good way," said Ethel, who was a nice child, but rather liked to have the last word; "I am sure I have often seen my aunt look as if she would like to do the same."

"But you never heard her do it, you pert thing. And, talking of your aunt, what do you think she would say if she saw you lying here with your hair all in a mess, and with no shoes and stockings on?"

"I didn't come here to be scolded by an insect, so there!" returned Ethel; "and, as I said before, fly away home!"

"Where do you think my home is?" returned the Ladybird.

"Ah!" said Ethel, opening her blue eyes wide, "that's what I should like to know. Why, you can go anywhere. Perhaps you live on the top of St. Paul's; my brother Ernest told me that he had seen thousands of ladybirds up there, clustering in the stone leaves, and all about the outside."

"He told you the truth, and I am glad that he noticed what he saw. Most persons see things without noticing them."

"If you are going to preach," said Ethel, "I shall certainly shake you off, which I should be sorry to do, because it's bad luck, like sending away a black kitten, or looking at the new moon through glass."

"I am ashamed of you, superstitious little thing!" said the Ladybird. "Your aunt never taught you that nonsense!"

"Will you be quiet about my aunt?" said Ethel. "She's not yours, you know. I suppose you've some old bumble-bee for an aunt, and very likely a lot of black-beetles for cousins."

"You are an ignorant puss," said the Ladybird. "I am of the distinguished Cochinella family."

"Some people call you a Lady-cow," said Ethel, rudely, "Would I be called a cow? Are you going home, or are you not?"

"How you would like to go with me! But clumsy creatures like you, with no wings and only two legs, cannot visit the wonderful places in the world."

"I dare say they are not a bit more wonderful than the beautiful scene I am going to see in the new pantomime, with thousands of fairies in golden robes, gliding about in the air, while lovely green fires light up their dresses, and make them sparkle."

"Come, you are a good sort of child, and I like you for enjoying what is set before you; but you do not know everything," said the Ladybird. "How would you like to see a thousand ice-mountains, like enormous diamonds, floating in a clear green sea, and then the sun looking out at them, and turning them all into rose-colour?"

"But I do not believe that you have seen that," said Ethel, thoughtfully (her family had slightly contradictory habits), "because there could have been nothing for you to eat in such a place."

"Couldn't I eat sea-moss, you little doubter?"

"Does moss grow on icebergs?" asked Ethel, but with some hesitation.

"No," said the Ladybird, laughing good-naturedly, "and you were right to make the objection. But it might be in a ship, and so might I."

"Yes; but you had better be at home with your poor little children, and then they would not have set the house afire."

"That is a story," said the Ladybird, getting redder than ever. "It was a foolish scandal made up by some spiteful spiders, because the glow-worm came and spent an evening with the children, and she hates spiders."

"There's no fire without smoke," said Ethel. "I mean there's no smoke without fire; but the moral is the same. What about the little one under the stone?"

"An early loss," said the Ladybird, wiping her eye with her off fore-leg. "It was buried by the fairies in a most respectable manner, which is more than a spider will ever be, I tell them."

"That does not seem good grammar, Ladybird; but if you are going to tell me stories about fairies, I don't want to hear any more. There are none."

"Why, you said just now that you expect to see thousands."

"Do you think I don't know that they will be only big girls and little ones, paid to dress themselves up and make believe? What stupid children you must be in the habit of talking to!" remarked Ethel, loftily. "And it seems to me that if you can fly all over the world and see such wonders, they don't do you much good if you believe in fairies, and can't speak proper grammar."

"Grammar isn't everything," said the Ladybird, sulkily.

"The power of expressing sensible ideas in appropriate lan-

guage, regulated by recognised rules, is one of the chief signs by which we distinguish the educated from the uneducated individual," said Ethel. "But do not be angry. I ought not to set my wits against a mere insect that eats leaves and buzzes. I wish you would go away, for I don't want to talk any more."

"And I am sure nobody wants to hear you. Instead of taking advantage of a chance of hearing all sorts of new and strange things, you have wasted your time in making doubts and pert answers. If you had been humble and listened to me, I could have told you marvellous things; for instance, about that mysterious Aurora Borealis."

"I know all about it. Streams of electricity, remarkable for their vastness; but no more mysterious than the crackle of our black puss's back on a frosty night!"

"And about the Rainbow?"

"I know all about it. It is the arch of a circle, consisting of all the colours formed by the refraction and reflection of rays of light from drops of rain or vapour appearing in the part of the hemisphere opposite to the sun."

"And about the Volcano?"

"I know all about it. It is merely an orifice whence are ejected a variety of substances subterraneously fused, and—"

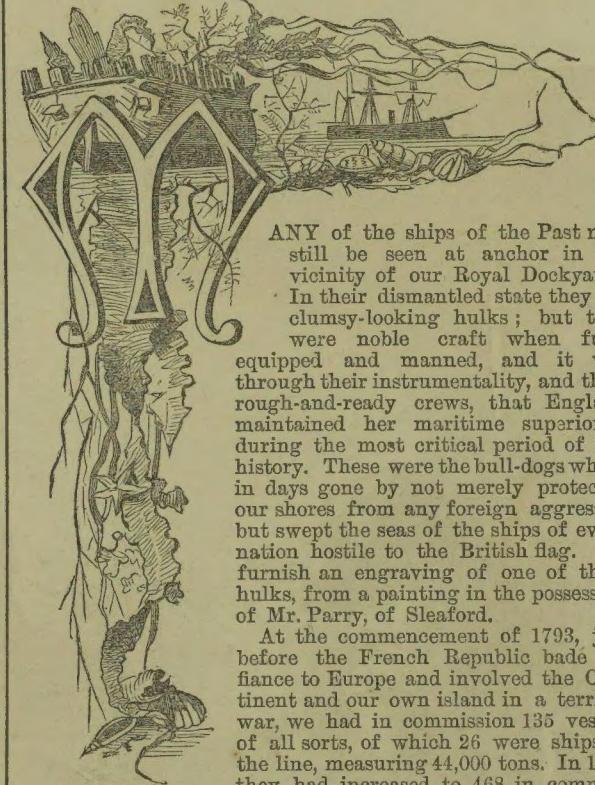
"You are a most objectionable child," said the Ladybird, "and I wish you a good-morning!" and, angrily fluttering up her various wings and covers until she looked like a lady shawled for the opera, she flew away.

"I'm glad I had the best of it with that impudent insect," murmured Ethel, and said no more for another hour.

At the end of that time Ethel did not exactly get the best of it, for her aunt, who had missed her, discovered her asleep, with her toilette in the imperfect condition shown by the lady who has made so charming a picture of Ethel, engaged as she supposed herself to be during her imaginary conversation with a Ladybird. However, Ethel and her aunt were very fond of one another, and they soon made things up. A sterner person than her aunt could not long be angry with such a pretty little girl. But this last sentence is not meant to be read by young persons.

SHIRLEY BROOKS.

THE NAVY, PAST AND PRESENT.



ANY of the ships of the Past may still be seen at anchor in the vicinity of our Royal Dockyards. In their dismantled state they are clumsy-looking hulls; but they were noble craft when fully equipped and manned, and it was through their instrumentality, and their rough-and-ready crews, that England maintained her maritime superiority during the most critical period of her history. These were the bulldogs which in days gone by not merely protected our shores from any foreign aggressor, but swept the seas of the ships of every nation hostile to the British flag. We furnish an engraving of one of these hulls, from a painting in the possession of Mr. Parry, of Sleaford.

At the commencement of 1793, just before the French Republic bade defiance to Europe and involved the Continent and our own island in a terrible war, we had in commission 135 vessels of all sorts, of which 26 were ships of the line, measuring 44,000 tons. In 1800 they had increased to 468 in commission. In 1812, when at war with both France and the United States of America, our wooden walls had reached 621 in commission, of which 102 were vessels of the line, measuring 185,000 tons. Each of these three and two decked ships mounted from 60 to 120 guns, and was manned by a crew varying from 500 to 800 of the most skilled, and perhaps the most daring, seamen that the world in any age has ever produced. We then presented a front to all our enemies which they vainly attempted to destroy; but, though so powerful then, how insignificant was the force of that proud fleet when compared with the war-ships of to-day!

Not one of the three-deckers of our fleet of 1793 mounted guns throwing shot of 24 lb. weight, except the 32-pounders on lower decks; and only five of the first-rates carried 18-pounders on the main deck, the great bulk of the guns then consisting of 6, 9, and 12 pounders. These guns were, however, superseded soon after the declaration of war by 24 lb. and 32 lb. carronades, which in their day proved most effective weapons. About the year 1838 the carronades gave place to guns of much heavier weight, and within a few years of that time the lower decks of our line-of-battle ships and the main decks of our frigates mounted 8-in. guns. But simultaneously there was produced an instrument more terrible than the gun with its solid shot of 68 lb. weight. The shell, which in its progressive movements has entirely changed our war-vessels and in a measure altered the mode of maritime warfare, was then for the first time introduced into the Navy.

In the mean time, steam had become an important motive power. Paddle-wheel-steamers, which at first were limited to about 300 tons, were at last built of 1500 to 1800 tons register, mounting on their upper decks shell-guns of 10-in. bore. But these steamers, though valuable for skirmishing and for other purposes where sailing-vessels could not be employed, were otherwise found to be very inefficient in war, from the facility with which their paddles and machinery could be destroyed or disabled by the fire of the enemy; and consequently they were superseded by the application of the screw. There then arose a vastly superior class of wooden line-of-battle ships, represented by the Duke of Wellington, of 700-horse power, mounting 121 guns; the Jean D'Acre, of 101 guns and 600-horse power; and the James Watt, of the same engine-power, mounting 91 guns, the extra gun consisting of a heavy pivot on the upper deck. But, beyond these splendid ships of the line, we sent to sea a class of unrivalled frigates, of which the Impérieuse, of 500-horse power and 50 guns, and the Arrogant and Dauntless, of 40 and 24 guns respectively, were excellent specimens. No country ever built nobler and at the time more powerful vessels than the frigates, of from 2000 to 3000 tons, which we launched from our dockyards, as it were, only the other day; and yet, within the last few years, these have been put aside by the ironclad fleets of the Present.

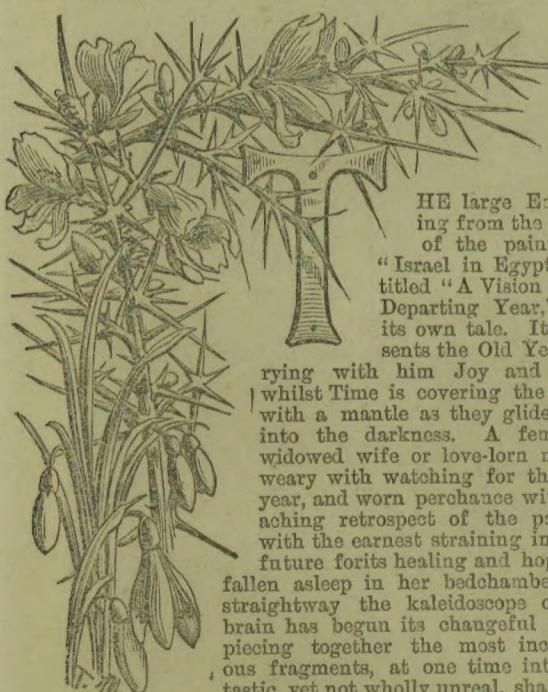
The Warrior was the first of this class. Though a magnificent ship, she is in many respects inferior to the Sultan, of which we furnish an illustration. We have now—they seem the creation of yesterday—afloat and in course of construction, besides what have been ordered this year, no less than forty-seven of these gigantic armour-plated ships. Eleven of them have a uniform maximum speed of 14½ knots—or more than sixteen miles—an hour; eight have a speed of 13 knots; and thirteen will sail at the rate of 12½ knots, which far exceeds the average speed of the merchant vessels of our own or of any other country. Combined they measure 178,000 tons, propelled by 37,500-horse power; and their 591 guns could throw a broadside of more than 62,000 lb. of metal.

Nevertheless, in the face of this gigantic power, there are many persons who are constantly complaining that we are not sufficiently armed to maintain our maritime supremacy; others, again, tell us that, however powerful our armoured fleet, it would have been much more so had there been less variety among the ships and their armaments; but these critics forget that our fleet of the Present is even now only an experimental one. War is still waged between the artillerist and shipbuilder. Messrs. Armstrong and Whitworth are still prepared to manufacture guns which will penetrate any armour-plate that the Admiralty can produce. The Warrior and Achilles class were designed to carry 68 and 100 pounders, and were plated to resist guns of that size; but these vessels were hardly afloat before projectiles of 250lb., 300lb., and 400lb. weight were created to destroy them; then we had to build ships of the Bellerophon, Hercules, and Audacious class, to carry such great guns; and to plate them with armour sufficient to resist a shot or shell of the increased size. These, in turn, have already been found too weak to cope successfully with vessels which could throw a shot or shell of 600lb. weight. Consequently, the Monarch and Captain were produced, with guns, fitted in a turret, capable of throwing in any direction, and for a distance of from five to six miles, projectiles of that enormous weight. Cased in iron armour, 7in. and 8in. thick, with a backing of 12in. of East India teak, upon a skin of 1½in. plate-iron, supported by massive framework 10in. deep and longitudinal girders of similar dimensions, one would suppose that a side was now presented which no shot could penetrate. But artillerists tell us they can destroy even ships thus built; and before Mr. Reed left office he submitted for the approval of the Admiralty the plan of a ship with 18in. of armour on the broadside and 20in. upon her turrets. Indeed, we have seen it somewhere stated that the Russian Government already possesses a 20-in. gun, weighing 50 tons, and throwing projectiles of 1120lb. weight, with a charge of 130lb. of powder. If any foreign nation can build ships to carry and work effectively such guns as these, our fleet may continue to be an experimental one for many years to come. And we may require to build even larger ships than those submitted in the spring of the present year by Mr. Henwood for the consideration of the members of the Royal United Service Institution, in which he proposes to place 1000-pounders.

However, it is satisfactory to know that, whatever the future may produce, we at present possess a maritime force which could bid defiance on the ocean to any two other nations; and that if any three nations, backed by their fleets, attempted to land their armies on our coasts, we possess a power which, we think, could successfully resist even so unlikely an invasion. But, though we may deplore a vast annual expenditure on experiments—on ships to be built only to be surpassed as soon as they are launched—there is no help for it so long as other nations attempt to surpass us. We care not for the armies of Europe; but England, regardless of the cost, should have ever ready a fleet sufficient beyond all doubt to protect her shores and guard her now gigantic commerce. On these shores a foreign foe must never be permitted to land. For their protection a number of powerful floating batteries, which could be manned by our reserves and transported with ease to any given point, might answer our purpose better than seagoing ships of the Captain class; and we can have no better police for the protection of our maritime commerce than the fleetest frigates the world can produce. We throw out these suggestions for consideration should the rivalry between the artillerists and shipbuilders continue to be waged.

W. S. L.

A VISION OF THE DEPARTING YEAR.



THE large Engraving from the pencil of the painter of "Israel in Egypt," entitled "A Vision of the Departing Year," tells its own tale. It represents the Old Year carrying with him Joy and Love, whilst Time is covering the group with a mantle as they glide away into the darkness. A female—widowed wife or love-lorn maid—wears with watching for the new year, and worn perchance with the aching retrospect of the past, or with the earnest straining into the future for its healing and hope, has fallen asleep in her bedchamber, and straightway the kaleidoscope of the brain has begun its changeful round, piecing together the most incongruous fragments, at one time into fantastic, yet not wholly unreal, shapes, at

another into a marvellous symmetry, order, and verisimilitude of form. Or if, as some physiologists with good warrant assert, our dreams are merely the instantaneous flash of returning consciousness, then the joy-bells that have begun to peal in honour of the new year may have quickened the sleeping sense and given shape and consistency to the mournful introspection of the waking hours.

It may appear a gloomy view of the passing years that they take away so much and leave so little; but, after all, it is a true one. Poets and painters, preachers and psalmists, Solomon and even the "greater than Solomon," have looked at life from the sad side; and it is not the utterance of a peevish discontent, but of a common truth, that there is not a joy the world can give like that it takes away. Democritus found ample material for his laughter as he looked at mankind, but it was laughter of a sardonic nature, and the reverse

of any real mirth. Heraclitus, more tender and true to humanity, wept as he contemplated the life of man—the shadows we are and the shadows we pursue.

Joy and Love are departing in the sleeper's vision, which seems to be a reproduction of the waking thoughts; and yet, even as they are passing away they turn a lingering look back upon their former possessors, as if they would fain leave still a memory of what they once had been. And this is one of the compensations for our losses, that the recollections even of departed joys still remain to us, and that, as Tennyson has so aptly phrased it,

"Whate'er befall,
Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all."

The heart, even in its desolation, can stray back again to the green pastures of former years, even as the spirits of the departed are fabled to hover over the scenes which they have once frequented, or to mingle in shadowy converse with those whom they have loved on earth. All is not lost whilst memory lasts; but the severest wounds left by Time are healed by the benefice of the same agency, and give way to a subdued and not entirely painful retrospect. Love and Joy have once dwelt in the heart; and they still leave behind them the sweet-smelling savour of their former presence. Time may bear away the objects of our affections, but the subjective existence is still our own. To this we may cling. Unreal though it be to others, to ourselves it has vitality and essence. Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are not, is an exception to the rule that our sorrows are softened, not by forgetfulness, but by the remembrance of all that was good and lovely in that which is lost. It is not the recollection of departed good, but the consciousness of past evil, that is really painful. It is the debauch, and not the moderate feast, that is succeeded by weariness and disgust.

But there are, it must be allowed, many hearts pining away in secret sorrow, to whom this good Christmas time, that cheers the falling year with hope, brings no cessation or relief. Memory is painful, for it tells them of past joys and dead affections which never can return, or it upbraids them with the thought of what they might have been if only they had seen with their present eyes and felt with their present hearts. Wise after the event, they hear with desolating emphasis a voice within them constantly crying, "Too late! too late!" Such a burden is intolerable. The struggle is perpetual, and yields not to the soothing influences of time.

Keats has expressed this desolation of a spirit that is comfortless:—

"Were there ever any
Writhed not at passed joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbed sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme."

But even here the anguish arising from the loss of a happiness that once was ours is limited to the case of those who can find no alleviation either from themselves or others, or to those who are of so sensitive a nature that they are constantly haunted by the presence of a sorrow that fills the void of a past joy. For there is the healing balm of sympathy and new associations on the one hand, and on the other the very magnitude of the blow brings with it its own mitigation in the stunning effect which prevents us from feeling its full force until the means of relief are at hand. Thus we acquire a power of suffering and bearing out of all proportion to our estimated strength; and the paradox that the power of enduring is inversely as the greatness of the blow is almost justified by our personal and daily experience. Great trials are borne where little annoyances are intolerable. The bullet that passes through a limb is almost unfelt, whilst the mote that drifts into the eye produces an exquisite pain. And so a man whose nerves are unstrung by the slightest shock, and who shrinks from the most trifling bodily suffering, will often bear the most serious diseases without a murmur, and meet his death with the utmost composure and unconcern.

The world would indeed be a vale of tears and gloom, if there were not this power of endurance in addition to the numberless compensations of all kinds around us. If all is vanity, it is no small alleviation that we are for the most part unconscious of it, and that, if we follow the phantoms of our own conjuration, they are nevertheless permitted to bear all the shapeliness and substance of reality.

Love and Joy may pass away like the other shadows to which we cling; but the whirligig of Time may bring them round again to the same abode, or seat them in other hearts, so that the sum of human happiness may not be diminished. Dark and sad though the Old Year be, yet it is ever of bright augury, as it is of suggestive significance, that this is the time of the New Birth. Extremes meet. Whilst the Angel of Death is abroad in the earth, and war is again almost crushing out the hope—the yet immortal hope—of the better time, the same persistent voice proclaims, as through the long and weary centuries it has ever proclaimed, "All peace on earth, good-will to men." It is to come; but, alas! where is the sign of its coming? This is no phantasy; or, if it be, then are we all mere dreamers, and nothing is real for which the good have lived through their life-struggle, and, hoping all things, have still borne on to the end.

Our faith is in a future of brightness, however sombre the shade beneath which the year is sinking, as surely as the day succeeds the night; for not only—as the Artist has represented—does Time bear away from some hearts their Love and Joy, but he also removes passion and prejudice and soothes and heals our sorrows. Nor is this all; but he carries us onward and upward to the goal of perfection. If it is an exploded fallacy that the present age is modern, instead of older and wiser than those which we call the ancient times, it is no less erroneous to suppose that, as the world grows older, it becomes more decrepit. It is not the age of Tithonus, ever feebler with the advancing years; but rather that of Hebe, continually refreshed and rejuvenated by ambrosial food. The progress is slow to the impatient watcher, who fain would reap in the ebbing and seed time; but sure as the slow upheaval of the ocean-beds to be the landscapes of the future is the gradual advance of the human race to a higher and nobler life. A backward glance of a few years only, while it reminds us individually that we ourselves are growing older, or that we are outliving the many objects of our affections, almost startles us by the reality and the pace with which social and political life has advanced. If we cannot recruit our own youth, we yet feed with our blood the body politic, which continually grows more vigorous and mature. Though the present desolating war may seem to be at variance with advancing civilisation, it may yet be found to be only a rough and summary means of effecting a great gain by a great sacrifice.

In spite of all the depressing circumstances which throw a gloom over the present, the angels' song will yet be heard through the length and breadth of Christendom as the harbinger of hope, and a standing assertion, as though of a truth which nothing can silence, that the normal state of the world shall in the time to come be one of universal peace and

good will from man to man. Let, then, the old year take with it our joys or our fears, our loves or our hates, and let Time cover the past with an impenetrable oblivion; there yet will remain to us, instead of vain regrets and painful retrospects, the higher faculty of looking to a bright and hopeful future with a vision rendered keener and more sensitive by the darkness from which we have emerged.

A CHRISTMAS VISITOR.



ESTLING in their warm blankets, our curly-headed little cherubs in white have slept and dreamt. During the night they have been enjoying a visionary Christmas Day; they have been to the holly-decked church in the morning; they have eaten their mince-pies and Christmas pudding; and, above all, their Uncle William has paid his yearly visit, laden with all sorts of presents—woolly-coated bleating lambs running on wheels, rosy-cheeked dolls that only require a gentle squeeze to make them talk, Noah's arks, boxes of sweetmeats, and a host of other enjoyable gifts. Their nurse awakes them with "A merry Christmas to you!" and informs them of the arrival of an unexpected guest in the shape of Mr. Robin Redbreast. Out they jump from their beds, and sure enough there is the pert little fellow tapping at the window. Gone to the winds are their visionary dreams of Christmas presents. They will not be satisfied until nurse brings some crumbs for their feathered visitor. It may be doubted whether they will derive as much pleasure from all their Christmas festivity as from this hasty reception of poor half-starved Robin. In this kind action of theirs our little friends are experiencing the force of that Divine precept, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

I. W.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU!"

"Two pairs of little feet flying over snow,
Two pairs of little hands voting by a Show,
Two pairs of red lips voting by acclaim,
Two pairs of bright eyes voting just the same!
Peeping from a muff, too, there's the Druid berry;
Oh, the merry omens! Of course, I will be merry.

Saw me at the Lodge Gate. Why did I stop there?
Perhaps I stopped to leave behind a little bag of Care.
I never bring such luggage up to Merryweather Hall;
And when I go the chances are I quite forget to call.
I left it, for I know two Rogues, armed with the Druid
berry,
Would rob me of it laughingly, and tell me to be merry."

"CHRISTMAS MORNING IN THE OLDE TIME."

The "old, old fashion" of going to church on Christmas Day seems a thoroughly English institution; and the two gentle dames who are represented in our Illustration, attended by the page bearing on a cushion their Bible and Book of Common Prayer—or, rather, their missals of the earlier Church—are fair examples of the noble womanhood of this nation some four centuries ago—perhaps in the age of the Paston Letters. Such were the widowed mother and the maiden sister of a valiant knight slain in the Wars of the Roses; desolate, high-born ladies of ruined fortune, left in the ancient hall of their family with small hope of friendly visits; constant in their charities to the poor, as in their pieties towards Heaven; sadly brooding over the troubles of the time and the losses of their race and order; yet disposed to greet the approach of Christmas with a holy joy in the Divine promise of Redemption, which has consoled the mourning hearts of Christendom these eighteen hundred years. It is enough for us here to suggest the character and condition of these persons; and we leave them in respectful silence to pursue their morning walk to the sacred building, where the offices of their religion shall afford the comfort they seek.

WILLS AND BEQUESTS.

The will of Lady S. E. Lawrence was proved in the London Court under £4000; the will of Sir H. Berney under £8000; the will of Christopher Wilson, Esq., under £250,000; the will of Mrs. Caroline Lucas Rennie, of Southwick Crescent, Hyde Park, and Wateringbury, Kent, dated Dec. 1, 1854, was proved, on Nov. 8 last, under £30,000. She has bequeathed to the Royal Naval School, New-cross, a legacy of £500.

The Queen has given, through Sir T. Biddulph, £3 to Eliza Cooper, the wife of a labouring man, residing at Thorne Dyke, Cheshire, who, in November, gave birth to two girls and a boy, who are still living.

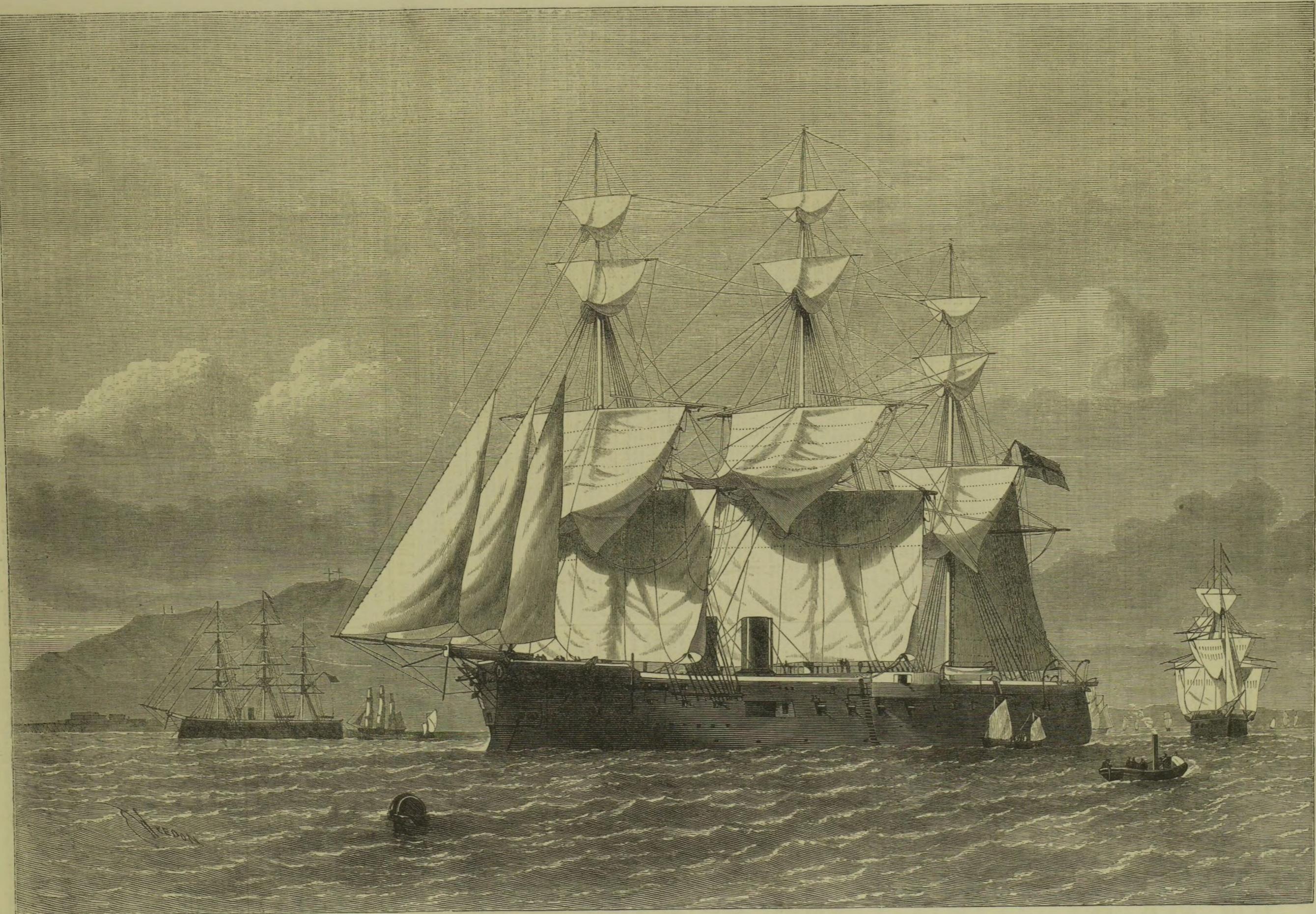
As there is but little hope of Mr. Bright's health being sufficiently restored to enable him to resume his official and Parliamentary labours in the approaching Session, the right hon. gentleman has resigned the office of President of the Board of Trade.

Colonel Stuart Wortley is exhibiting the whole of his admirable artistic photographs at the gallery, 9, Conduit-street, with the liberal intention of devoting the proceeds of sales (after payment of expenses) in aid of the funds for the victims of the war in France.

The case of "Cullen v. Brophy" in the Dublin Probate Court has been compromised. Mr. Egan, the heir-at-law, is to have £5000 in addition to his legacy; and the Brophys, who are next of kin, get £6500 in addition to their legacies. The costs of the parties are to be paid out of the assets. Judge Warren said that there could be no doubt that the testator was of perfectly sound mind when the will was executed. There was no foundation for the allegation that undue influence had been used by Cardinal Cullen or any of the plaintiffs.



THE BRITISH NAVY: THE PAST.—DRAWN BY S. P. JACKSON,



THE BRITISH NAVY: THE PRESENT.—H.M.S. SULTAN.—DRAWN BY E. WEEDON.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL NEWS.

SPAIN.

Senor Moret made his financial statement in the Cortes last Saturday. He announced that the deficit of the last two years was 323,000,000 reals. The Government is able to meet the external debt out of the revenue of the country. In respect to its internal engagements, he proposed the issue of Treasury Bonds to the amount of 900 millions of reals bearing twelve per cent interest, and redeemable at the price of issue at intervals of eighteen months. Senor Moret declared himself in favour of the poll tax.

ITALY.

The Parliament is actively engaged in adjusting the details connected with the incorporation of the Pontifical territory. The Minister of Finance has also introduced a bill for the unification of the Pontifical debt.

GERMANY.

The King of Bavaria has telegraphed to Versailles that all the German Princes, with the Hanse Towns, have signified their adhesion to the proposal that the King of Prussia should assume the title of Emperor of Germany.

The King of Prussia, on receiving the address of the North German Parliament at Versailles, on Monday, thanked the deputation for the support the Parliament had afforded the Government, by voting supplies for the prosecution of the war, and by co-operating in the work of national unity. His Majesty continued as follows:—"The request addressed to me by the King of Bavaria, to re-establish the dignity of Emperor of the old German 'Reich,' has filled me with deep emotion; but you know that, in this question, which affects such highly-esteemed interests, and memories so greatly cherished by the German nation, my own feelings or my own judgment cannot influence my decision. Only in the unanimous voice of the German Princes and Free Towns—only in the united wish of the German nation and its representatives—shall I recognise a call from Providence to which, relying upon God's blessing, I could conform."

The Lower House of the Prussian Diet has elected Herr von Forckenbeck President by 339 votes, Herr Keller Vice-President by 326, and Herr Beningsen second Vice-President by 230 votes. The Minister of Finance has submitted the Budget for 1871, and reviewed its principal features, which are analogous to those of the Budget of 1870. There is no deficit.

The Mecklenburg Diet has rejected the Government motion for the payment of 28,000f. for a certain number of years in redemption of the Scheidt dues, and has adopted the motion of the committee appointed to report on the question which proposed that 14,000f. should be paid for that purpose for an equal period, while the other moiety of the redemption money should be furnished by the Hanse Towns.

The Baden Chamber of Deputies has unanimously ratified the Federal treaties and sanctioned the military convention with Prussia, with only one dissentient voice. The House has adopted the bill providing for the requirements of the military administration for the prosecution of the war, and a bill relating to special military services, and the compensation to be awarded. By the first bill a further credit is granted of 4,575,000 florins, to last from Jan. 15 till March 15, 1871.

The King of Wurtemberg, at the opening of the Parliament at Stuttgart, on Monday, said that brotherhood in arms had stimulated the desire for political unity; and he exhorted the members to discuss the federal treaties with regard to the future development of the relations they established.

A telegram has been received in Luxembourg from the King of Holland, who states that he will do all in his power to defend the Treaty of 1867, and the neutrality and independence of the grand duchy.

In the sitting of the Luxembourg Chamber on Monday the Minister of State declared that all the grievances put forward by Count Bismarck were founded on false reports. Amid unanimous cheering, the Minister read the text of the note from the King of Holland, which ran as follows:—"I in every way approve the conduct of his Royal Highness and of the Ducal Government with respect to the Prussian note. Let us together defend the London Treaty of 1867, and the honour and independence of the Grand Duchy."

A telegram says that Prussia has taken all the preparatory measures to ensure the annexation of the duchy of Brunswick. It is added that the reigning Duke Augustus, who is unmarried, wishes to abdicate in favour of King William of Prussia.

More than quadruple the amount of the new North German loan opened at Berlin has been subscribed for in Germany, of which three parts are applied for in thaler bonds and the rest in sterling bonds.

GREECE.

The new Cabinet has been constituted as follows:—M. Coumoudouros, President of the Ministry and Minister of the Interior; M. Cotostavios, Minister of Justice; M. Botzaris, Minister of War; M. Soteropoulos, Minister of Finance; M. Christopoulos, Minister for Foreign Affairs; M. Anargyros, Minister of Marine and Public Worship. All the new Ministers are members of the Chamber.

AMERICA.

The Republican State Committee of Virginia has unanimously adopted a resolution denouncing any form of repudiation of the State Debt.

The latest intelligence from New York is of a favourable character, and gives hopes that the anti-British party will be frustrated in its attempts to precipitate a war between England and the United States. Mr. Adams, formerly Minister in London, has made a speech advising moderation on the part of America on the Alabama claims; and the *New York World* condemns the bellicose ravings of General Butler and urges the Government, in pressing its claims in respect to the fisheries question, not to require humiliating concessions from England. The *Tribune* deals with the same questions in a similar spirit, and says the dormant war between the two countries should terminate, as the bitterness and resentment of the Americans has nearly died out. Regarding the fisheries, the *Tribune* says that serious men recognise the sinister aspect of the question, but it hopes that Great Britain will act promptly upon the vigorous reclamation which General Schenck is sure to present.

The letter of Mr. Reverdy Johnson on the subject of the Alabama claims, of which we heard by telegram, is published. It occupies two columns of the *Times*. Mr. Johnson has not "the shadow of a doubt" that if the convention he concluded with Lord Clarendon had not been repudiated all the losses to American citizens inflicted by the Alabama and other vessels fitted out as she was would long since have been fully discharged. The public sentiment of the people of Great Britain, as Mr. Johnson was enabled to see it, obviously favoured such payment. And, as far as he had an opportunity to learn it, the opinion of Parliament was to the same effect. Under this convention the question of the recognition of Southern belligerency, as well as any other question which either Government might think proper to raise before the com-

mission, could have been presented. No attempt, Mr. Johnson says, was made on his part to delude Lords Clarendon and Stanley in this or any other matter. Such an attempt would have been equally foolish and futile. These statesmen possessed great experience and consummate ability. And while they were both solicitous that the most friendly relations between the two countries should be established, they never would have consented to, or could have been deluded into, any arrangement which would have surrendered any material right or injuriously affected in the least degree the true honour of England. Mr. Johnson warns President Grant's Government not to expect that England will make any further offer. The whole matter, therefore, as far as the private claimants are concerned, is ended, and without a reasonable hope that they will at any time obtain indemnity through the action of their Government. The American Government is bound, under these circumstances, in justice, in law, and in honour, to permit the claimants to seek redress for themselves. No part of what is due to them belongs to the Government. It has no more right to seize upon it to accomplish some end of its own than it would have, if the British Government were to transmit the amount claimed to the State Department for the benefit of the claimants, to refuse to pay it over, and appropriate it to some purpose of its own.

ANSWERS TO THE CHARADES
ON PAGE 646.

I.

Bare spots by moss are clothed with mantle green;
No lovelier flower than blushing rose is seen,
Except the Moss-rose, which is beauty's queen.

II.

First A we learn, then A B C right through
'Tis seldom any do their best—do you?
While many make of nothing much Ado.

III.

The craven soul for quarter snivelling cries;
Each newton day with glory fills the skies;
And Quarter-Day is both a blank and prize.

IV.

The war-steed's neigh shrills through the battle's roar;
Ah! how excruciating is a bore!
But a good Neighbour, who would wish for more?

V.

Full many a nut has kernel soft and sweet;
Meg is Love's shorthand for dear Marguerite;
To most things Nutmeg gives a flavour meet.

VI.

Coughs and catarrhs with East winds have full sway
"To err is human," so the proverbs say;
And Easter is the poor man's holiday.

VII.

Who sees a bride nor blesses her fair face?
"All's well that ends well" in life's fitful race;
For slight misdeeds a Bridewell is the place.

VIII.

Who than a jolly tar is jauntier, smarter?
Though grimy tar, no doubt, gave Jack his charter;
May every gay deceiver catch a Tartar!

IX.

Man is creation's heir, as is most fit;
No letter should without a date be writ;
A despot's Mandate bends all souls to it.

X.

Sure none so rude to call a lady plain?
From tiff I warn all lovers to refrain;
An empty shell is oft the Plaintiff's gain!

XI.

Who would be loth to kiss a maiden fair?
Where could you find an airier sprite than air?
A puzzle like Lothair? and Echo answers—Where?

XII.

A blessing on the plough and farmer's care!
Of Christmas blessings may all have their share!
The plough includes the Ploughshare, you may swear.

XIII.

Life's sweet to all! The pleasure-boat glides by,
Fanned by soft breezes; but should winds wax high,
Then "Man the Life-Boat!" is the thrilling cry.

HOME NEWS.

The "Doctors' Day" at the Merchant Taylors' School was held on Tuesday. At the close of the speeches, Dr. Hessey took his leave of the school.

A charge under the Debtors' Act, lately brought against Sir W. Russell, M.P., was finally disposed of at the Mansion House on Monday, when the Lord Mayor, after a brief deliberation, dismissed the summons.

After having spent nearly forty years in ministering to the amusement of the public, Madame Celeste has retired from the stage. She made her final appearance at the Adelphi last Saturday, and received a hearty greeting from a large and brilliant audience.

The thirty-ninth annual Christmas performance of "The Messiah," at Exeter Hall, will be repeated by the Sacred Harmonic Society on Friday next, Dec. 30, when Madame Sinico, Madame Viardot Garcia, Mr. Vernon Righby, and Mr. Santley will be the principal vocalists.

Sir Francis Grant, distributing the prizes to the art-students of the South Kensington District Schools yesterday week, took occasion to refer to the high character of the instruction given in schools of art, and to the influence for good which must be wielded by those institutions. The number of students in the year ending July 30 was 994—viz., 565 males, and 425 females.

At a meeting of the Chemical Society, on the 15th—Professor Frankland, F.R.S., Vice-President, in the chair—the following gentlemen were elected Fellows:—G. T. Atkinson, R. Koma, I. T. Stark. Mr. Perkin read a paper "On Some New Derivatives of Conmarin." The author succeeded in obtaining, among other interesting bodies, a new acid of the constitution of $C_6H_5O_3$, which he proposes to call conmarilic acid. Dr. Debuss discussed the formula of glyoxylic acid. He has a great many reasons which induce him to write this formula $C_2H_2O_3$ and not $C_2H_4O_2$. Dr. Odling was of the same opinion, whilst Mr. Perkin adduced proofs for the correctness of the latter formula.

From the report presented at a meeting held last week at the Mansion House, it appears that the idea of establishing a National University for Technical Education is assuming a substantial character. An appropriate site upon Crown land, in the neighbourhood of Battersea Park, has been fixed upon, and negotiations with the Office of Works are pending.

A meeting, in which the commercial interest was largely represented, was held, yesterday week, at the Westminster Palace hotel, to take into consideration the vexatious arrangements with respect to the pattern post. A resolution calling upon the various commercial associations to unite in endeavouring to obtain the abolition of the new regulations was passed.

At a meeting of the Metropolitan Asylum's District Board, on Saturday, it was stated that the Hampstead temporary hospital was quite full, and the smallpox was still on the increase in the metropolis. Both from the north and east of London there were accounts of the insufficiency of hospital accommodation. The managers promised that every effort should be made to meet the existing want.

Yesterday week Mr. Ayrton, M.P., laid the chief corner-stone of the new General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. The building will be of four stories, and have four fronts, two each 286 ft. in length—one towards St. Martin's-le-Grand and the other in Bath-street; and two each 144 ft. long—one in Newgate-street and the other in Angel-street. The estimated cost is £129,700.

A meeting, chiefly of agriculturists, was held, on Monday, at the Salisbury Hotel, Fleet-street, to frame the necessary organisation for supplying gratis to the peasant farmers of France, whose provision of seed for next year has been destroyed by the war, supplies of corn and other grain for sowing. Lord Vernon, President of the Royal Agricultural Society, occupied the chair; and not only large quantities of seed were promised, but above £1000 in cash was subscribed.

Amongst the contributors to the poor-boxes of metropolitan courts are the Merchant Taylors' Company, £20; a Spinster Lady, late C.V., £10; and Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, £5. The Fishmongers' Company have sent twenty guineas, and the Leathersellers' Company ten guineas, to the Royal Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, City-road. A grant of ten guineas has been made by the Leathersellers' Company to the funds of St. Peter's Hospital, Berners-street.

Several presentations of prizes have lately taken place in metropolitan corps. General Sir Francis Seymour, Bart. C.B., distributed the prizes to the members of the 36th Middlesex, yesterday week, at St. George's Hall. The presentation of prizes to the 37th Middlesex took place at the Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen-street, on Saturday—Colonel Stedall presiding. The tenth annual distribution of prizes to the successful competitors in rifle-shooting of the 3rd City of London also took place on Saturday evening, in the Guildhall—the Lord Mayor presiding; the annual presentation of prizes to the 7th Surrey Corps took place at the City Terminus Hotel, Cannon-street—Lieut.-Colonel Beresford, M.P., in the chair. The annual distribution of prizes for shooting and attendance of the 19th Surrey took place, on Thursday week, at the Horns Assembly Room. Lieutenant-Colonel Lebrow presided. Prizes were presented to the West London, on Monday, in Westminster Hall.

The Earl of Derby has consented to act as a Vice President of the Curates' Augmentation Fund.

At a meeting of the Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, yesterday week, a resolution in favour of the abolition of University tests was carried by a large majority.

Mrs. James Holland, widow of the late Mr. James Holland, solicitor, of Preston, has given £10,000 towards the fund for increasing the means of educating the Roman Catholic poor in Preston.

The Earl of Derby pleaded the cause of the idiots of Lancashire, yesterday week, at a banquet given in the Manchester Townhall, under the auspices of the local committee of the Royal Albert Asylum.

A lady has offered a prize of £50 for the best essay upon the system of flogging, as practised among children at public and other schools. The essays will be adjudicated upon by Dr. Edmunds, 4, Fitzroy-square, London.

Yesterday week the public award of commissions for the Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery, and the presentation of prizes at the close of the term, took place in the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.

At a meeting of the Royal Irish Agricultural Society, on Thursday week, a letter was read from Major Knollys intimating the acceptance by the Prince of Wales of the presidency of the society for the year.

A widow named Stevenson, residing in St. Gregory's, Norwich, has attained her hundred-and-first year. She has a daughter seventy-seven years of age. This daughter is a widow, having lost three husbands. She is, however, about to marry again.

The annual distribution of prizes competed for by the members of the 1st Manchester Rifle Volunteers during the year took place, in the Townhall, King-street, on Saturday evening. Lieutenant-Colonel Bridgford was in the chair; and there was a numerous attendance.

On Saturday morning a Lancashire and Yorkshire passenger-train, on approaching the Stoneclough station, ran into a goods-train which was being shunted. The driver of the latter was killed, and many of the passengers were much shaken. A dense fog prevailed at the time.

The Government has taken advantage of the approach of Christmas to send a new message of peace and goodwill to Ireland. Mr. Gladstone has written to Sir W. Carroll, late Lord Mayor of Dublin, stating that the Government has decided to recommend the Crown to release the Fenian prisoners, on the condition of their not remaining in, or returning to, the United Kingdom.

The Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, have decided not to hold a "gaudy" this year, but to devote the expenses attendant on the festive gathering to the fund for aiding the sufferers in the present war. Their example has been followed by the authorities of Magdalen College, who have notified that their annual Christmas-Eve entertainment will not be given, and that the amount so saved will be devoted to the same good object.

The periodical collection on Charity Sunday in Birmingham has this year produced the sum of £4025, the largest amount yet received for the amalgamated charities of Birmingham. The money has been apportioned by the committee as follows:—To the Dispensary, Children's Hospital, and Eye Hospital, 51 per cent; to the Blind Asylum, Deaf and Dumb Institution, Homoeopathic Hospital, Orthopaedic Hospital, Lying-in Charity, and Sanatorium, 45 per cent; and to the Ear Infirmary and Dental Dispensary, 4 per cent.



CARED FOR.—BY L. HUARD.



UNCARED FOR.—BY G. REGAMEY.

THE FAMILY PEW.



ARNERED in a secret drawer of an old escritoire, a family relic, was a packet of sketches, among which the portrait of a charming young lady figures largely, and a closely-written diary, all brown with age. The drawings show evidence of genius, though they lack technical skill; while the autobiography is that of a prodigal son, whose misdoings (evidently overcharged in the colouring by the writer) had cast a shadow over a once happy home. Outbursts of passionate self-upbraiding, yearnings for a home life, are strangely jumbled with lighter matters—jest, drinking-songs, strokes of broad humour, and flashes of grim, sardonic satire, yet never coarse or ribald. It is not uncommon for persons of Bohemian tastes, from whom regularity and precision are the last things that might be expected, to be formally precise in dates and kindred matters, and to have a conscience in their handwriting. Such seems to have been the case with our unknown diarist; for every sketch and scrap of writing, clear as copperplate, is duly numbered, and distinct headings are given to every section.

One of the drawings, entitled "The Family Pew," shows the interior of a dimly-lighted country church, to which his sympathies were, it is evident, strongly drawn; though not for its artistic merits; for, as shown in several sketches, it was a dull, low-browed building, crowned with a squat tower. There was, however, a mortuary chapel of some beauty connected with it, in which were figures of mailed knights who had fought in the Holy Land, and of noble ladies with their hands meekly folded on their bosoms. One of these forms the subject of a sketch and a paper, bearing conjointly the title of "The Sainted Lady;" and it was, as we learn, the remarkable likeness which a fair cousin bore to her that fired his heart with love.

As the drawing of "The Family Pew" is reproduced in this Number, it may be as well to give the corresponding leaf of his diary.

After stating in detail the steps he had taken to leave England, having determined to turn over a new leaf in a new country, it proceeds thus:—"I resolved to have, if possible, one parting look at the dear ones at home before I left them, perhaps for ever. For this purpose I took, early on Christmas morning, a place on the top of the Lightning coach, which flashed along at the rate of six miles an hour on level ground, hoping to arrive at our village in time to see (myself unseen) the home folk going to church. Cramped and nearly frozen with the cold, for I was thinly clad, I stumbled on the short distance I had to walk after I left the coach, until exercise brought life and feeling to my limbs. But, with all my haste, I was too late. Too late, indeed! Has it not been my curse through life to be too late? When I gained the hill-top whence my native village was to be seen, snugly nestling in the narrow vale below, the church bells had ceased, and the last straggler had entered the sacred portal. Dear Marwood! there it lay basking in the bright sunshine of that Christmas morn (the last time I gazed on it from this height the air was fragrant with new-mown hay); its single straggling street zigzagging up to the time-worn, yet much-loved, church close under my feet. I quickly reached it, and stole like a thief to the porch. Through the partly-open door came the sweetly-simple chant in which I had so often joined. Summoning resolution, I drew nearer, and, filled with vague forebodings, looked, through a chink in the door, for our family pew. Yes! bless them! they were all there! Neither death nor sickness had laid a hand on any one of that blest circle; thank God for that! The picture, so clear and distinct one moment, was in the next blurred and hazy, seen through my fast falling tears. I kissed the dusty door again and again, for the sight smote me with an agony of grief and joy. A thousand tender memories crowded on me. So Adam must have looked, from outside, at the Paradise he had forfeited. Only that my father had taken to eyeglasses since I saw him last, age had not seemingly told upon him. My mother, dear soul, looked nearly as bonny as ever, though she was vexed and worried by the boys in the adjoining pew. It had always been the case; for fresh members of a ne'er-do-well-family, with endless supplies of marbles, came to torment her as the older members passed into the world. My sister, who had fought my quarrels so bravely, and one dearer even than sister, were also well. There seemed a touch of sadness on the faces of all—it was for the prodigal, whose nearness they could not guess? All through the service (in which I joined heart and soul), till the sermon was, I knew, about to close, I gazed, mostly through a mist of tears, at that family group—other well-known faces, though not directly seen, coming within the range of vision; when, just as I was about to tear myself from the spot, a hand was laid on my shoulder, and a cheery voice—it was that of Jack Townley, who had been my sworn companion at school, and was now my sister's accepted suitor—said 'What, dear Dick, caught at last! Come with me, old fellow!'

There is a hiatus in the copy here, where some nibbling mouse has been at work; but it can plainly be gathered from the remaining leaves that the prodigal, softened, no doubt, by the time and place, yielded to his friend's importunities, aided by the mention of some facts of which he had been ignorant, and went off with him to brighten himself up before joining the family circle. It is beyond the present purpose to tell by what ingenious stratagem this was brought about, or to describe the gladness of the interview, and how warmly the prodigal was received—for his earnest determination to reform had been made known to them. Suffice it to say that the day was spent joyfully; and that in the evening he appropriated a certain young lady nearly every dance, which, as she was very pretty, showed a little greediness on his part—excusable, perhaps, under the circumstances; the evening being wound up by Sir Roger de Coverley, when, I warrant, the powder flew in ambrosial clouds from ladies' head-gear and gentlemen's pigtails. For those were the days of hair-powder; of towering head-structures, patches, pinched waists, and enormous fardingales on the part of the ladies; and of lace ruffles, buckles, queues, wigs, and three-cornered hats on the part of

the gentlemen, who strutted about dressed in the fag-ends of rainbows.

A few years spent abroad (during which this peep into Marwood church, fixed on paper by his facile pencil, was to our diarist a source of great delight) enabled him to lay the base of a stable fortune; and every succeeding Christmas Day he formed one of the group in that family pew. J. L.

"CARED FOR" AND "UNCARED FOR."

"Uncared for" is to be looked at first; he cannot long be left to await our attention. Poor French soldier, brave man stricken by the unsparing storm of lead and iron that has scoured the battle-field in the hours of furious strife, and now left alone with the dead or dying—a desperate soul in a broken, anguished body; grimly thinking of the defeat and ruin of his country, or of the dear friends in his native village whom he shall never meet there more. The good old mother, whose declining age he had hoped to cheer; his sisters, Marie and Lisette, who had been so proud of the gallant presence of their soldier-brother, at the wedding of the younger, at the christening of the elder's child—his comrades of the school, the playground, the workshop, faithful Pierre, and merry Jacques, and steady old Jean Levasseur—those who had praised his manly spirit when drawn by the conscription, and who had since read his certificate of good conduct with an honest delight, will they ever hear of his forlorn death on this dismal plain? will they not be told only that half his battalion was helplessly slaughtered, and that he was among the missing when the ranks were re-formed next day?

He wonders how much blood he has already poured out from that big gash which the Prussian shell-splitter has made in the back of his thigh—how much blood of his heart has moistened the horrible ground upon which he sank and swooned under the sudden shock while fighting to defend the gun beside him—how much blood a young man has to lose before the heart ceases to beat, the breath to pass in and out, the brain and nerves to perceive, the frame to suffer, the mortal to live; and what then, and where, and how, and why? Let us not pry too curiously into the thoughts unspoken which come alike to every mind in that fainting of the human spirit, solemn but not unsweet, which is sure to be experienced at least once in each individual existence, but which many persons have to undergo on repeated occasions; when all their doing and suffering on earth seem to be over, and they lie in the calm expectation of instant parting from this confused and imperfect world.

The wounded soldier may yet be saved; he may, before the flames of yonder burning village have ceased to defile the pure, soft moonlight, which God has set in the sky for a symbol of heavenly peace, be found and gently lifted by the litter-bearers of a charitable ambulance corps; he may be carried to a bed in the neighbouring field-hospital, where kind nurses and skilful surgeons will attend to his grievous hurts. The poor fellow may yet be healed, and live, and see the home of his youth, and witness the love and joy of his family, when he shall return to share the useful labours and simple pleasures of their rustic estate. Or he may, if still "uncared for," be picked up three days hence, a stiff and festering corpse, with features distorted by long-endured pain and starvation, to be tossed into the pit where a hundred nameless warriors are heaped together, like a number of spent cartridges, no more regarded than as the waste and refuse material of that martial glory which Kings, Princes, and Field Marshals win at their favourite game.

"Cared for," we are happy to observe, has a different story to tell of his fate; though he, too, was smitten by one of the enemy's missiles of destruction, and knocked out of the combatant ranks, happily for him, it may be, at an early moment of the day's dreadful struggle. His leg has not been cut off; the bones are fairly set, and will support him as firmly as ever. He has strength to sit up in a chair, leaning upon a stick in his right hand, and to make a gesture of natural courtesy in acknowledging the kind approach of the good strange lady, a volunteer commissioned by the Society for the Relief of Sick and Wounded, who brings him a cup of nourishing drink. Is she an English or Irish woman, an American, or even a German, who performs this Christian office for the sake of humanity—that is to say, for the sake of the Father, and of the Son, in whom humanity and God are at one? It matters not what be her nation or country, her Church, or creed, or class; the service in which she is employed—O sacred cross of red on pure white!—is the work of universal philanthropy denoted by that noble badge upon the helpful arm. It is the sole redeeming feature of grace and good in the history of this accursed war of 1870, which has transformed millions of European citizens to the moral likeness of the wild beast or the fiend; which has drenched the earth with blood, and has filled the air with the foul scent of slaughter; with mad shrieks of pain and rage, with groans of sorrow in widowed homes, and with the insolent voices of triumphant cruelty, pride, and rapine. This modern crusade of organised charity to assuage the sufferings of war's myriad victims is the only real advantage to mankind that can possibly result from a course of action which true State policy, as well as reason, conscience, and Christianity, must entirely condemn. It is the good that comes out of so much evil. May the evil be overcome by the good! Above the might of conquerors and monarchs, with a million of bayonets at command, is the mission of Divine Mercy, by the willing hearts, hands, and gifts of Christians from every nation.

"A PRISONER OF WAR."

Christmas festivities in the midst of a military campaign seem not very auspicious, or congenial to the institution of that sacred yet mirthful holiday, which we delight to honour and enjoy, with an outburst of kindly feeling towards all mankind. But men will fight so long as their rulers choose to play at the game of warfare, and while the silly nations submit to be so played with; and when the fighting is protracted from July to December, it becomes needful to eat the Christmas dinner, such as the soldier can get, in grotesque vicinity to the field of mutual murder, perhaps with the ingredients supplied by licensed robbery, called foraging, to furnish forth the feast. "Peace on earth, to men good-will," is an excellent, wholesome Christmas sentiment; and roast beef is an excellent, wholesome Christmas dish; so the Prussian in the spiked helmet, who has captured a fine beast in the stall of a French peasant, may both appease the cravings of a martial stomach with seasonable meat, and indulge his honest German heart with a glow of benevolence, aided by good beer and tobacco, when he and his messmates of the regiment sit down to their meal. It is pleasant to see them laughing and clapping their hands as this worthy fellow, Hans Pickelschwein, of Krummendorf, in Mecklenburg, brings his horned prisoner of war to the outpost, proud of the welcome prize he has won. "Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his awful front" to these valiant fighting men, and they look for an hour of comfortable enjoyment in camp; but how will it be with the poor Frenchman and his wife and children, to whom

the animal justly belongs? Their Christmas, we fear, is likely to be a very sad one. For Want is the sure follower of War, because War is accompanied by Waste of every kind. This visitation will not be confined to the ravaged fields and ruined villages of France. It will yet meet the men of the returning German army in their own homes. The loss of six months' productive labour will have left a diminished store. Its effect may be felt at their next Christmas dinner.

MUSIC.

The commemorations of the hundredth anniversary of Beethoven's birth have been so long in progress at various concerts, and have so largely formed the subjects of our comments for many weeks past, that we may pass somewhat briefly over the Friday's and Saturday's more immediate celebrations of the event, especially as all the works then performed have been given and noticed recently.

The second concert of the Sacred Harmonic Society was held yesterday (Friday) week—the eve of the anniversary referred to, when the Mass in C and the oratorio "The Mount of Olives" were performed with all the vast resources of the institution, conducted by Sir Michael Costa. The solos of the mass were sung by Madame Sinico, Mdlle. Drasidil, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Mr. Lewis Thomas; and those of the oratorio by the same singers, with the exception of Mdlle. Drasidil—the names of the performers being sufficient to indicate the merits of their performances. The choral and orchestral effects were such as we have been accustomed to at these concerts.

The day itself was trebly kept—first, at the Crystal Palace, where the twelfth afternoon concert, and last of this year, was entirely devoted to the music of the composer, chief among the works performed having been the ninth and last of his great orchestral symphonies—that called the "choral" symphony, from its finale including a vocal setting of Schiller's "Ode to Joy" ("Lied an die Freude"), which was given with great efficiency in its merely orchestral portions; and as much as can reasonably be expected in the part which taxes so extremely the vocal executants, solo and choral. Madame Arabella Goddard played very finely the pianoforte part of the choral fantasia and the thirty-two solo variations on an original theme in C minor, her performance in each having elicited, as it deserved, the warmest applause from a very large audience. The overture to "Prometheus" and various "lieder," sung by Misses E. Horne and Elton, Miss Arabella Smythe, and Herr Stockhausen, and the incomparable cantata "Adelaide," by Mr. Vernon Rigby, completed the programme. The vocalists just named were the principal solo singers in the choral symphony.

The afternoon of Dec. 17 was devoted to Beethoven at the Saturday Popular Concert held at St. James's Hall, where the ninth string quartet, the sixth pianoforte trio, and the solo "Waldstein," pianoforte sonata, were played; and "Adelaide," sung by Mr. A. Byron in replacement of Mr. Sims Reeves. Mr. C. Hallé was the solo pianist, and Madame Néruda the leading violinist.

Saturday's celebrations were completed by a performance of "Fidelio" at the Royal Italian Opera House, which opened its doors specially for the occasion, exactly one week after the close of Mr. Mapleton's winter season there. The cast of "Fidelio" was identical with that of frequent previous performances, and similar to that recently noticed by us. We need, therefore, merely record the repetition of the opera, with the fine singing and acting of Mdlle. Titien as Leonora, in association with Mdlle. Sinico, Signori Gardoni, Foli, Rinaldi, Caravoglia, and Tagliafico, as efficient representatives of Marcellina, Florestan, Rocco, Jacquino, Pizarro, and the Minister. The third Leonora overture preceded the opera, and was encored, No. 4 (in E) having been given before the second act. The quartet in the first act was repeated, as usual. Signor Aratti conducted.

THE THEATRES.

Our critical functions are this week superseded, it not being likely that any novelty would be produced so near the advent of pantomime. All attention is now turned to what is likely to be done on Boxing Night. Apropos of that important time, we may at once mention that Mrs. Howard Paul will on that important eve resume the stage for a short time, and will appear in a musical version of the famous story of "Gil Blas." Prince Poniatowski and Mr. Musgrave have written the music. The piece will be produced at the Princess's, under the title of "Little Gil Blas, and how he played the Spanish D(j)euse"—written by Mr. H. B. Farnie.

But we must fall to something more like a regular method, and record in due order the programmes of the different houses, beginning, as usual, with Drury Lane, which will be supplied with a pantomime by Mr. E. L. Blanchard. The title is a familiar one, "The Dragon of Wantley; or, Harlequin and Mother Shipton." The scenery, by Mr. Beverley, will, no doubt, be magnificent; the music, by Mr. W. C. Leyey, good; and the costumes what they should be. Mr. Edward Stirling has the general arrangement; the Vokes family will have a large share in the impersonations; the pantomime scenes are to have the benefit of Mr. Nelson Lee's invention; Messrs. Harvey and Evans will be the Clowns. The scale of grandeur on which the pantomime is projected is announced to be unprecedented.

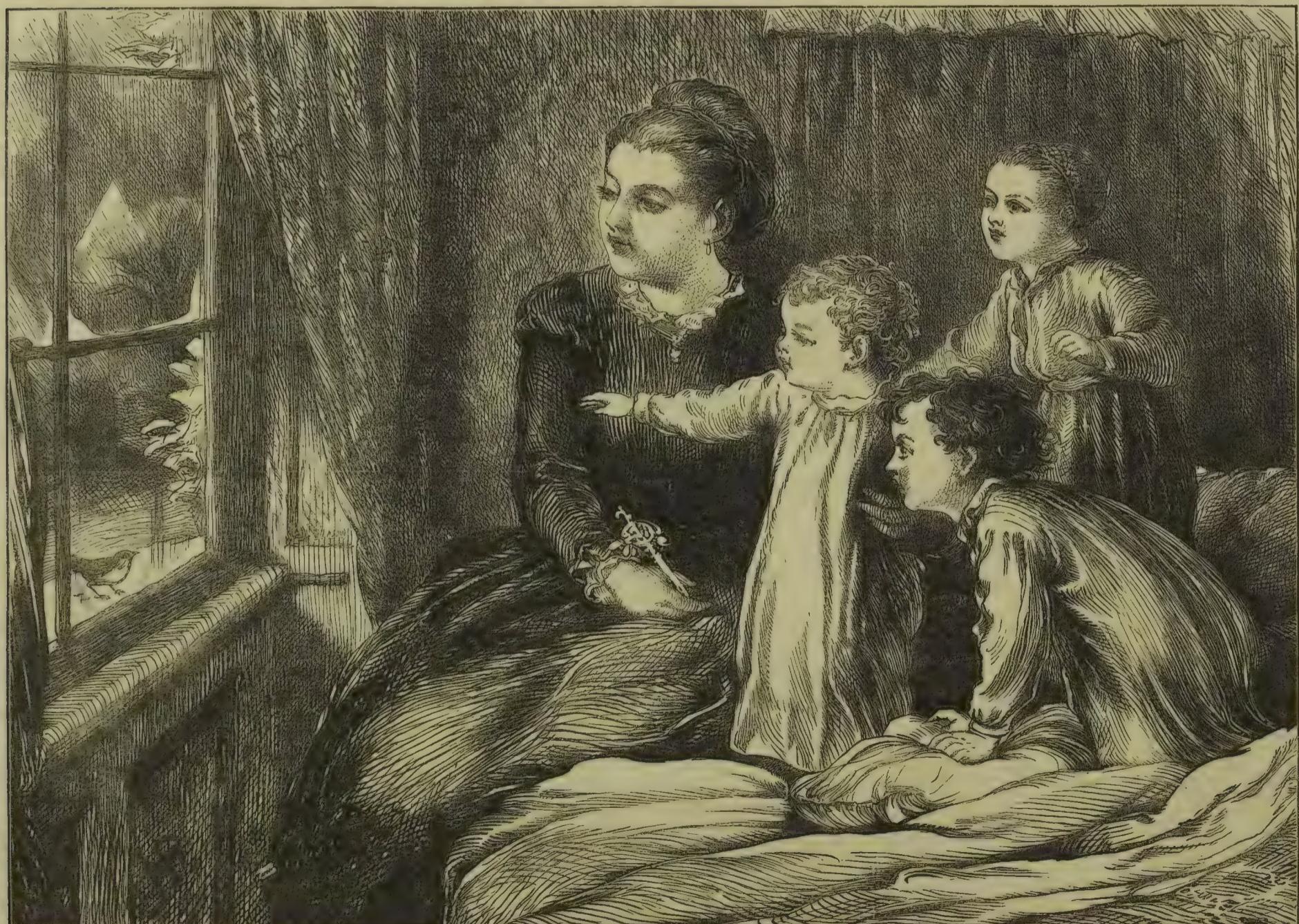
The pantomime at Covent Garden is called "The Sleeping Beauty; or, Harlequin and the Spiteful Fairy." Messrs. Gilbert à Beckett and Charles Ross are the authors. It will be produced under the management of Mr. A. Harris; scenery by Messrs. Hawes Craven, Dayes, Julian Hicks, Caney, Cuthbert, and W. Telbin. M. Hervé will write some original songs for the opening. Great magnificence is promised in the appointments. The Paynes will support it, aided by C. J. Smith (long absent), Taylor (from the Adelphi), Aynsley Cook, Les Petits Russells (from the Cirque Napoleon), the Brothers Kellino, Miss Julia Matthews, Miss Leslie, Mrs. A. Cook, and a clever child named Miss Nelly Smith. Five principal dancers from the Continental theatres will add to the attractions.

At the Adelphi a new burlesque will be produced, entitled "The Mistletoe Bough; or, Lord Lovel, Lady Nancy, and the Milk-White Steed." The authors are Messrs. Farnie and Musgrave. We are promised a strong cast. It will be preceded by a one-act drama, by B. Webster, jun., called "Smoke," supported by the well-known names of the company. At the Princess's the burlesque will be preceded by the late Charles Dickens's "Christmas Carol," dramatised, with the author's sanction, by Mr. Edward Stirling.

A burlesque will also be produced at the Strand, "an original talisman-ical" one, called "Cœur-de-Lion," written by Mr. J. Strachan. It will be produced with superb accessories, and supported by the talent of the company and a recherché corps de ballet.



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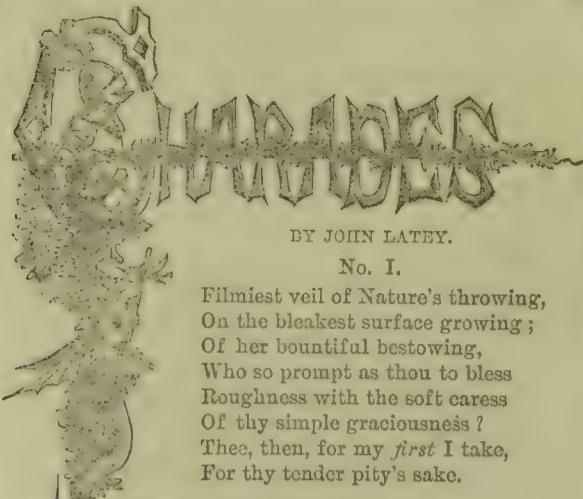
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TO THE
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DEC 24, 1870.



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BY JOHN LATEY.

No. I.

Filmiest veil of Nature's throwing,
On the bleakest surface growing ;
Of her bountiful bestowing,
Who so prompt as thou to bless
Roughness with the soft caress
Of thy simple graciousness ?
Thee, then, for my *first* I take,
For thy tender pity's sake.

Who a fitting mate can be
For a modest thing like thee ?
Ah ! the very one I know,
Though her cheeks with blushes glow ;
Peerless maid of many a one
Kissed by the enamoured sun.
Her as *second* will I take,
For her brilliant beauty's sake.
Nor, though lovely, will she scorn
Thee, the simple, lowly-born ;
But with fondly-loving pride
Take thee, clasp thee, to her side.
So my *whole* shall all confess
Purest type of loveliness.

No. II.

My first is a quickly-learnt letter ;
My second all wish were done better ;
My whole from the tiniest bubble
Brews oceans of turmoil and trouble.

No. III.

When hostile ranks in fury meet,
And eddying tides of battle burst,
Cut off from hope of safe retreat,
Some cravens clamour for my *first*.
More would you know ? My *first*'s a station ;
A measure ; region of the skies ;
A wee bit of the moon's rotation ;
A joint which housewives justly prize.
Than my *second* what is fairer ?
With ought else can one compare her ?
All nature mourns and dies
For lack of her glad eyes.
Where'er she moves, birds sing
And flowers their censers swing
Thus lovingly they woo her
And give warm welcome to her.
My lady debonair
Is good as she is fair ;
For through the crowded city,
Where squalid Want abides,
Each morn, with loving pity,
My Sister o' Mercy glides ;
And all things seem more bright,
Inspired by her delight.
One class of men—right lucky fellows they !—
Wait eagerly the coming of my *whole* ;
While others, as it nears them, shrink away
As victims from a vampire or a ghoul.

No. IV.

Bitter words become not honeyed lips,
Whose touch entrances in a sweet eclipse ;
How sad when, pursed as if to blow a kiss,
They with my *first* lay low a lover's bliss !
A war-horse, when the battle roars,
And fast the thick-set squadron pours,
As crashing comes th' opposing tide,
My *first* will do in martial pride.
Up a tidal river flashing
Comes my *second* swift and strong,
Like a row of fierce sea-monsters
Sweeps the foaming mass along.
Ladies needs must feel my *second*
Ere bright ear-drops they can wear
But my *second* should one marry,
What is hers but dull despair ?
"Who's my *whole*?" is asked in Scripture
When a trump, a blessing he ;
But what daily rack of torture
If my *second* he should be !

No. V.

Though hard without, yet soft and sweet inside,
Is found my various *first* when duly tried :
So rough exteriors in men oft hold
Hearts childlike tender, and as good as gold.
Ah ! how I used to vex
The dearest of her sex,
When into my *second* I curtailed her Christian name.
The darling, how she pouted,
And how my love she flouted,
Till I rang her full name out, and owned myself in blame.
The best of puddings and of junkets too
The absence of my *whole* would greatly rue ;
And what would negus be without my *whole* ?
A body left of its inspiring soul.

No. VI.

If you've learnt to box the compass,
Then you know my *first* full well ;
Proverbs say my *next* is human ;
While my *whole*'s a festival.

No. VII.

The bells with merry burst ring in the gladsome day
When forth my winsome *first* goes on her new-made way.
May her fair future spread bright as the sky above ;
And not a cloud o'erhead e'er dim her heaven of love !

Tis best to leave my *second* alone,

A homely, time-worn proverb cries ;
While another, just as widely known,
Says a rare jewel in it lies.
A third, with Shakespeare's warranty, contends
That "All's my *second* that my *second* ends."
There was, erewhile, in London city—
There is no more, the more's the pity—
A place—my *whole*—where slight defaulters
Were sent to keep their necks from halters.

No. VIII.

My first 's a jolly fellow,
For sailing all about
Has brought his virtues out,
As wines by travel mellow.
This gallant British rover
Loves the deep sea so well
That, forced on land to dwell,
He's often half-seas over.
My second is a tree's rich blood,
That oozes like an inky flood ;
My second also is my *first*,
Which is my *second*, unreversed ;
For each to each is sworn twin brother,
Who sees the one has seen the other.
If some poor coxcomb, vain and fickle,
Should win, then break, a woman's heart,
There is for him a rod in pickle—
O that he felt its tingling smart !
Yes, let the heartless poltroon catch
My whole, a feminine Old Scratch !

No. IX.

Lacking my *first*, the world were null ;
My second from a tree you pull ;
Yet wanting it, however sweet,
E'en billets-doux are incomplete.
Issues my *whole* from eastern throne,
And none can call his soul his own.

No. X.

Just like a pikestaff is my *first*,
Or like the noblest Roman spear ;
Of any lady at the worst
'Twere rude in stronger terms to speak.
My second 'twixt lovers and friends
Is by far too common a thing ;
Though all's well, we're told, that so ends,
'Twere safer to clip young love's wing ;
For if love or friendship take flight,
Who can tell how far it may roam ?
Who knows where it next may alight ?
Or if it will ever come home ?
Men on their dignity will stand
About the merest strip of land ;
The veriest trifles are enough
At times to put them in a huff ;
Then one my *whole* will straightway be,
And loose the law-courts' devilry.

No. XI.

To kiss a pretty cousin, now,
On dimpled cheek or satin brow,
None but a dolt my *first* would be ;
Or, if the sweeter penance were
To kiss her lips, blest pouting pair !
Shame on him, if my *first* were he.

Airier than the airiest sprite,
Rosy red and lily white ;
Yet not always charming thus,
Oft she's black as Erebus ;
Now from flowers is stolen her breath,
Then, anon, 'tis charged with death ;
Soft and yielding, she can make,
In her mad fits, mightiest quake :
Such a seeming contradiction
Is my *second*, void of fiction.

But if so very puzzling be my *second*,
Then what will my much-talked-of *whole* be reckoned ?
"Absurd !" cries one. Another, " How sublime !
The crowning work of this the crown of time !
All is high art and subtle eloquence,
Well leavened by the shrewdest common-sense.
Here shafts of satire, tipped with keenest wit,
Now pierce a Churchman, now a pedant hit.
In fine, you here in miniature may see,
Distinct and glowing, man's epitome."
Here breaks another in—" Such fulsome praise
On such a book serves but one's bile to raise ;
All tawdry glitter, spangles, and pretence,
With not the feeblest glimmer of good sense."
The truth, as in most matters, lies between
These two extremes. Be ours the golden mean !
" A sparkling tale (say we), with many a fault,
And here and there some grains of attic salt."

No. XII.

My first calls up a rural scene,
Its use implies a hope serene ;
Sailors, 'tis said, upon the main
Perform like husbandry in vain.
Of this world's goods it may be reckoned
That few men think they have my *second*.
My second, and my *whole* as well,
Are in my *first* one found to dwell.
At times, you see, though it seems droll,
The part is greater than the whole.

No. XIII.

A pleasant thing my *first* is unto all—
To those that soar, or stately walk, or crawl ;
To elephants and monsters of the sea,
Down to minutest animalculæ ;
And chief to man, who, as in Sacred Writ
'Tis said, will give all that he hath for it ;
And yet, at duty's call, 'tis given away,
As children treat their toys when tired of play.

Merrily glides my *second*, I trow,
In the warm flushing of young Love's glow ;
Skimming swan-like, gracefully o'er
Its crystalline, emerald-gleaming floor ;
While spice-laden breezes gently blow,
And heaven above is mirrored below.

To-morrow tells another tale,
As shrieks the fiercely-rising gale ;
Old Ocean rises in his might,
And, darkly terrible as night,
He hurls his thundering waves on high,
Waging grim battle with the sky ;
And gallant ships, a nation's boast,
Are crushed against some rock-bound coast.
Then strive brave souls—true heroes they—
To snatch from greedy seas their prey.
My whole is in a moment manned ;
And, bearing each my *first* in hand,
Undaunted through the bursting wave
(In which, alas ! some find a grave)
They strain, in hope my *first* to save.
O gallant hearts ! may best success
Their noble efforts ever bless !

Nota bene. Would anyone befriend
The noblest institution of the land,
Let him or her a money order send
To RICHARD LEWIS, 14, John-street, Strand,
So shall my *whole* abound yet more and more—
Angels of mercy on our wreck-strewn shore.

The Answers are given on page 634.

THE BETHLEHEM WOOD-CARVER.

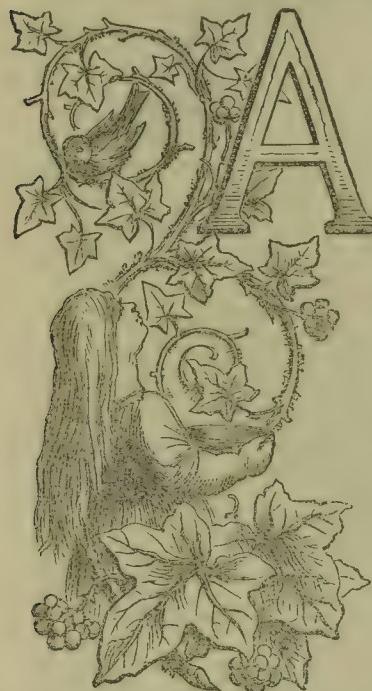


UR readers should know that the village of Bethlehem is mostly inhabited by poor Christians. The employment of many of these people is to turn and carve little crosses, of sandal-wood, the wood of the olive-tree, or vegetable ivory, perhaps afterwards dyed of various brilliant colours, for sale to the travellers visiting Jerusalem. They also make stone models of the crucifix, small cups and table-tops, paper-knives, brooches of mother - of - pearl, bracelets, strings of beads for rosaries, formed of bitumen from the Dead Sea ; and representations of the Virgin and Child, or of Mary and Joseph, engraved on scallop-shells, such as the ancient pilgrims in the Middle Ages used to bring home from Palestine. Near the door of the Church of the Nativity, at Christmas and Easter, stand the dealers in these pretty objects of local manufacture. The Protestants may buy them for memorials of an interesting tour in the East, or for presents to their friends ; the Roman and Greek Catholics, the Armenians and Copts, will cherish them almost with veneration when they return from the Holy Land. They are sometimes blessed by a priest, and fetch a high price. The artificer works in his own house, using a simple turning-lathe driven by a bow and string. Miss Rogers, in her book, "Domestic Life in Palestine," describes a visit made by her and her brother to the home of one of these men, whom they found at his work, sitting on the floor, surrounded by the products of his tasteful industry suspended on the walls. He was a cheerful, intelligent young man, dressed in a long coat striped of red and dark blue, with a crimson girdle, and a red and yellow shawl twisted about his head. His wife and child were in the adjoining courtyard, where a shelter was formed of matting spread over planks and tree-branches, with a vine trailed upon a rude trellis. In the corner lay heaps of large shells, from the Dead Sea ; lumps of bitumen, from the Wilderness of Ain Jidy ; pieces of rock and of wood, the materials of the carver's work. A pile of melons and a row of water-jars stood at the side. At the other was a fat lamb, munching mulberry-leaves, and now and then bleating. Such is the home of the Bethlehem wood-carver.

CHRISTMAS ON THE AUSTRALIAN GOLD-FIELDS.

BY R. H. HORNE, AUTHOR OF "ORION," ETC.

"Art thou not the same questor, quidnunc, and quiddity all over the globe? Ay—but here and there, with a difference."—*Old Play.*



and listen to one of the party, who is evidently singing, "Home, sweet home!"

But where are the women and the girls? They are all inside, and will sally forth when it suits them. Two of the native blacks have presented themselves, having "smelt the feast afar;" and in our second Illustration it is evident that one of the aborigines has inhaled the wondrous odour of a Christmas Plum-Pudding.

"Home, sweet home," being ended, "Shall we ever again see the old folk at home, I wonder?" says one of the men.

"I hope I shall see my married sister and her little ones some day," says another. "So glad I am," says a third, "that I brought my wife out here. Don't know what I should have done without her that bad time I fell down the shaft and broke my left arm."

"Me wife and kids, with their auld aunt in Cork, want to come out," says Pat Murphy; "but it's meself that wants to go back!"

"That'll all depend upon"—begins another.

"The next washing day!" cries a female voice from within. This technical joke upon the next "yield" from a certain quantity of auriferous "wash-dirt," accumulated by the last speaker, is highly appreciated by all the party.

"Well, as to wives," mutters the man lying down in front, with his faithful dog at his elbow—viz., Sailor Bob—"as to wives, I think a fellow's better as he is—much better in the bush, without one. 'Cept she's a werry good one indeed. Then it's all right enough. But, if she's a bad 'un, he'd as well have the deuce an' all at his side. Now here's this dog—my 'Bean-Blossom,' as I call her!"

The dog suddenly turned her head inquiringly.

"No, I don't want nothing, old gal;" and Sailor Bob passed his left arm affectionately round the dog's neck, who at once resumed her previous quiescence. "She would never desert me, especially if I were in trouble. But my wife did." And Bob gave a dig with his finger into the bowl of his pipe.

"How was that?" inquired one of the younger men of the party. "Used you to come home tight, Bob, now and then, and give her a tanning when she scolded you?"

"Nothing o' the sort. I never once lifted my hand to her. But she once lifted her hand to me—and worse—there was a fire-shovel in it. But I forgave her that, because, you see, I believe I was a little bit groggy and ridiculous like—calling names, such as the 'tongs and the bones,' coz she was so very thin and nobby about the joints; besides her temper."

"That was enough to make her a bit angry," said a laughing voice, the rest joining in the laugh.

"Well, p'rhaps it was; and, as I said, I forgave all that; but I can't forgive her for deserting a' me when I got into trouble about this dog, and because I was poor and had to go into the hospital with rheumatics, and then running off to California with a lucky digger—a German doctor he was—who said he would make her some day a baronet when he took her to his own—Well, you needn't laugh at a fellow!—baroness or countless, or some other rank—when they returned to his own estate on the Rhino."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed all the listeners.

"I don't see anything to laugh at," muttered the speaker yet with a look of dry humour. "Why shouldn't a lucky digger have a castle on the banks of the water?"

"Or a castle in the air!" and the merriment was renewed.

"But why did you call her Bean-Blossom?"—and the speaker pointed to the dog, by way of indicating that he was making no flowery allusion to Bob's wife.

"Because of her white skin, and these hero black blotches in her old face—one on 'em all over the left eye. Now, I call that reg'lär handsome."

"And so it is, for a dog. But how did you get into trouble about her, Bob? Let's have the yarn."

Here several voices muttered over their pipes, "Yes, give us the yarn. Sailor Bob's the chap for a yarn!"

"You understand," said Bob, acquiescently, and settling himself afresh, as he lay upon the ground; "you understand, when I first come out to Australia, I was a sailor; only I runned away from the hip. A good bit of wages was due to

me; but I didn't care for that. Bent upon the diggings you know. I had a few pounds in my pocket, which I hadn't had time to get rid of at Falmouth afore we sailed; so I took a lodging for a week in Melbourne. Had to leave, hows'er, the second day, as all my tin went, somehow. So I started off for Bendigo—very rich place for gold at that time—in company with a fellow-lodger named Flatman—Peter Flatman—who had also been cleared out of everything; and we agreed to be mates. We did a little work by the way—sawing wood for settlers, helping bogged drays, beating out bush-fires with gum-tree boughs, grubbing up stumps, driving bullocks—though we often driv'em into a fix—all just to boil the pot, you know, till we got upon the diggings. At last we fetched 'em—Bendigo, I mean. There were no deep sinkings of regular mines at that time, you remember, where a fellow could show his edification by running up and down a rope—all surfacings and shallow work;—and we were deuced unlucky. Couldn't get at the gold at all, worth speaking of. In the first three weeks we only made about £75 between us—nothing in comparison with other chaps—so we broke partners. We saw the luck was agin us. Afore we parted, Flatman says to me, 'Bob,' says he, 'you've been a true mate to me. Here's a keepsake; something I picked up unbeknown to you, Bob.' It was a nugget worth ten pounds—twenty maybe, for I lost it out of my pocket; rough and heavy, and it tore a hole as I went through the bush. And besides the nugget, Peter guy me his dog—this werry one here, my old Bean-Blossom (and Bob here gave her a hug)—as he said she seemed to take to me, like, more than to him—coz he stole her. And then Peter began to cry, and said he hadn't led a partick'ler good life afore he left th' old country; and now on parting with me—though he saw 'twas best, as we we'd no luck together—he felt what a bad sort o' fellow he'd been. But, besides the dog, he offered to put me upon something more valuable. Women was partick'ler scarce at this time upon the gold-fields—indeed all over the col'ny—and Flatman said he could put me upon a rare woman for a wife. She wasn't, he said, quite a new one, but as good as new. Her previous husband had just hung his-self, through drink, by reason of not finding gold. He was cut down from the lower bough of a peppermint tree. He had fired the tree afore he turned himself off, but it hadn't burnt well, only smoked a good deal; and the body of the un-fort-nate gentleman was as black as the devil. So his widow was now in the werry deepest of mourning, Peter Flatman said; but still, he said, I should be able to see what a handsome woman she must have been before she put on the infernal black and white crumples about the head and jaws, what spoiled her. Soon arterwards he introduced me, as a likely man, to the widow of Mr.—of Mr.—"

"Hang his name!" said a voice.

"Yes, werry good; this widow of Mr. Hang-his-name, certainly did loom rayther queer about the bows in her mournfulsome rig of white crimpings. She looked like a tall sweep on a snowy day. This dog here barked at her—which was odd as she herself holds out the same colours. I had a great mind not to make her an offer at first sight. Shy, like; and, besides, she was so frightful ugly. But Flatman whispered me that she was sitch a fine woman underneath!"

"And you really married her, Bob?"

"Yes, I believe so. They all told me next day that I was a reg'lär connubialated man."

"What! Didn't you know, Bob, without telling?"

"I sartainly did not; for, afore the parson came—or his clerk I think it was—in course I ordered into Mrs. Hang-his-name's tent three bottles of brandy, six bottles of beer, two bottles o' rum, and a case o' gin—as there were several on us, besides fellows looking in, and coming round us, and a-shaking hands, and laughing, and winking, and all that; and I do believe they carried me off that sublunarious scene, dead beat. Next day I found I was married!"

Not a little laughter greeted this account of Sailor Bob's wedding; and then one of the elder men remarked that he saw no signs of Bob's yarn about "the dog" ever coming to an end.

"The end's the worst part of it," resumed Bob. "It's just the end what I don't like coming to. However, my wife soon guv me to understand that I couldn't expect to have the honour of marrying a woman like she for nothing. I must go to work; work hard, hot sun or no sun; baking my varticle, or up to my starn-sheets in water. In return for this she would cook my dinner, she said, keep the hut clean, and take charge of the money. I think she lent Flatman £40 afore he went away; but I never know'd the rights of it. She swore she didn't. But that says nothing. Well, the hole where I was working had half a fathom or more of water in it, which was difficult to keep down, though we worked there with three shifts at the pump day and night. So one morning, at day-break, when I comed off the night shift, werry wet and tired like, and Bean-Blossom with me, who always waited for me at the top of the claim, all weathers, we both wanted breakfast quick, in course; and it wasn't ready. So we got close to the fire, and I pulls off my water-boots, and Bean-Blossom sticks her poor cold, dripping nose out towards the fire. When all on a sudden Mrs. Hang—my wife, I mean—ups with the frying-pan and gives the dog a flat bang on the top of the skull, just as you see the Clown give th' old Pantaloons in a Christmas pantomime, only the dog's head didn't go through!

So away she sprang, howling, and bolted out at the door. "What's that for?" says I. "Why do you hit the dog like that? What harm did she do a-warming her nose?" "Harm!" squealed the incarnate critter, like a weazel shot in the windpipe—"Harm! Am I obliged to give you a reason for everything?" "You'll give me a reason for that," says I, "or I'll put you out at the door, and fry the bacon myself!"

General applause—in fact, great applause—followed this bold declaration of independence.

"Whereupon she flings down the frying-pan upon my toes, as I was a-warming them at the fire—edgeways it comed down—and them out at the door she whizzes, like a badly-aimed rocket, and off she flames and flounces across the gully

to some neighbouring hut. I didn't follow her. Too disgusted like—besides the cut across my toes, without boots;—and besides that, I wanted my breakfast. But first I pulls on my boots again, and hobbles out to look for Bean-Blossom. Nowhere could the poor dog be seen. A heavy mist had risen, and I wandered about the diggings, calling, 'Bean-Blossom! Bean-Blossom, old gal!' (Down, gal, down!) But no sign of her. I met a miner, who was also coming off the night shift, and he said he had seen a dog with her head all bleeding, running slowly along that way. But which way was that way? 'Why, that way,' said he; 'Oh, I don't know—I'm too tired to talk.' Or think either, he might ha' said. So I wandered on and on, through the cold, silent mist, which had now come to be a werry heavy fog, and grad'ally I found I had quite lost all the workings, and was getting into the thick bush. Still, I kept calling "Bean-Blossom! Bean-Blossom!" but no sight or sound of her could be had. (Down, gal! down, I say!) I look'd for droppings o' blood. Perhaps her skull has been split, thought I, and the poor dog has crawled slowly beneath some of the underwood to die in secret, as poor wounded dogs always do;—mon, too, sometimes, especially in war-times. So, I went on and on, and round and about; and, after a while, when I began to think I must return, I found I was bushed. The fog was still dirty—woolly thick; but even if there had been no fog, I'm not at all sure if I could have found my way back—leastways, not for hours. Still I persevered, and marked some red-gum trees with my knife on the bark; and after a long time it happened, as common in the bush, and as I was afraid I should do, that I found I was wandering in a circle, for I comed back upon some of my marked trees. And then I was too done-up to go any further, besides the cut on my toes, and I just dropped down, and fell dead asleep. When I awoke, instead of broad day, the stars were all out! I then knew that I must have slept or remained insensible all day and part of the night, and I had got the shivers, all of an ague. When I tried to get up, I couldn't, or when I did, it was only to tumble down again. Then clouds came over the stars, and rain came drizzling, and all was dark; and the wind rose, and sounded in the trees overhead for all the world like a storm at sea. Somehow, the thought of that comforted me a bit. All the same, I soon became insensible again."

"Ah!" murmured one of the listeners, "it's always a bad business when it comes to that with a man what's 'bushed.' Sure to get the shivers with the dews at night."

"When I began to recover again, and before opening my eyes, I felt something warm going over and over my face and hands, and doing of me good. And when I looked up, it was Bean-Blossom, who had hunted me out. My heart came all afloat again. The stars once more were a-twinklin', but I think it must ha' been some hours later, as they was much higher—those I knew—and many had gone down. But I couldn't rise to my feet. 'Ah! my poor dog,' says I to Bean-Blossom, 'I'm afraid it's all up with me. You'll have to go home without me, for get upon my legs I cannot.' The ague had got hold of me, and was a-shaking of me, every limb. My teeth chattered, like a starving monkey; and I had no nose, nor feet, nor fingers—no feeling in 'em, I mean. So I laid myself out to die. But first I had to take leave of Bean-Blossom, and then send her home. Take my last leave on her, I did; but, as to sending her home, she wouldn't quit me. I ordered her—I explained how it was—and she understood me—I'm sure she did; but no, quit me she wouldn't. So there I lay, dying of ague and starvation—and the dog with me. Two nights and days more we lay, and were all but gone. Still she wouldn't leave me. Now, all you fellows, what's got immortal souls! (here Bob raised his pipe above his head with great emphasis) would any o' you ha' done that for the best friend alive? Not you. But this here dog did; and when she dies what becomes o' that ere thing in her what's better than your immortal souls? That's what I want to know. Well, as I was a-saying, there I laid a-dying o' thirst an' fever, and starvation, and the dog lying beside me a-doing the same of her own free will. There we lay with our eyes closed, waiting. Yes, my lads, waiting. Jack's ashore—murmured I inwardly—old Bob's aground. The dog looked werry sorry for me. I wished I had never left the sea. How much better to be wrecked and drowned like a man, than to lie here, waiting. For what?—the last trump, for deuce a biscuit seemed ever likely to cheer me more; nor a drop o' rum, neither. My head seemed fast sailing away! I wondered where my soul was going. I hadn't led such a bad life—for a sailor—and I had often done a good turn for others. So I fancied I'd be all right up aloft—leastways a goodish bit up the shrouds. Still, you know, I warn't quite ready to die; a fellow don't like it, however starving and choking with thirst, and his dog's tongue hanging out white, and both shivering all over. Nobody—nobody, I say—likes ezakly to die. But it seemed as I must. And as I felt how I must, I kept my eyes tight shut to bear it. And so I began to faint off to nothing. At this last ripple o' my ebbing fancies, Bean-Blossom suddenly raises her head and cocks her ears. She then gets up, shakes herself, as if to recover the use of her stiff limbs, and away she scuttles through the misty bush. In less than a quarter of an hour she returned with three miners on their way to the diggings, who she'd made to understand that they should follow her somewhere. So I got back. I did, lads. And this is the friend what saved me!"

Bean-Blossom knew that she was referred to lovingly, and now jumped about Bob's head and face most joyfully.

Sailor Bob's yarn lasted some time longer, in which he described at full length all his rheumatics in the hospital, during the whole of which time his unfeeling "rib" had never once been near him, and had finally ran off to San Francisco with one Jeremiah Sombybarns, a lucky digger and bush-surgeon, who besides had a "call" to preach to the heathen in California. The interesting pair were soon afterwards joined by Peter Flatman, who had another "call," so he said; and the three set up a whisky-store, for week-days, and made a power o' money.

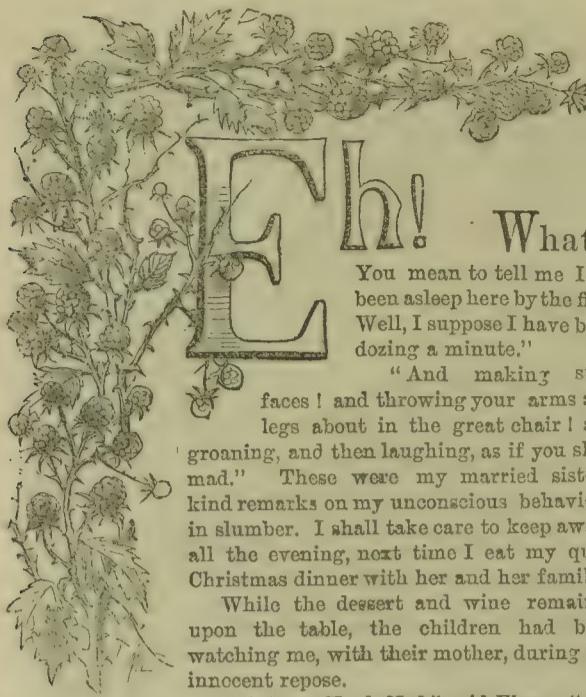


CHRISTMAS MORNING IN THE OLDEN TIME.—PAINTED BY G. H. BOUGHTON.



THE FAMILY PEW.—DRAWN BY E. HUGHES.

GATHERING FOR THE PANTOMIME.
A DREAM OF CHANCIFANCIA.



You mean to tell me I've been asleep here by the fire? Well, I suppose I have been dozing a minute."

"And making such faces! and throwing your arms and legs about in the great chair! and groaning, and then laughing, as if you slept mad." These were my married sister's kind remarks on my unconscious behaviour in slumber. I shall take care to keep awake all the evening, next time I eat my quiet Christmas dinner with her and her family.

While the dessert and wine remained upon the table, the children had been watching me, with their mother, during my innocent repose.

"Oh! yes, Uncle Ned," said Flossy, "you did look so funny, I thought it wasn't you."

"You must have been dreaming of something funny," observed her little brother, a namesake of mine. "I dare say it as the Pantomime you are going to take us to see to-morrow."

"Well, Ted, and so it was; that was a clever guess, my boy. Shall I tell you all about it now, Mamma and children? and then we can save our four or five shillings for each, by not going to the theatre at all."

My sister pretended to agree, but the proposal did not suit Teddy and Flossy. "No, no, no, no!" they cried; "we want to hear it first, and then see it."

"And then feel it, and then smell it, and then taste it," replied I; "for I do believe you think Pantomime is something nice to eat, like Pudding, and the rest of Christmas. Well, you must try to understand that I thought I was lifted off the earth, but not very far, into another sort of world. There were clouds, like a soft fleece of white vapour, to look down upon between that world and this of London. It would have been safer and more comfortable, in my dream, if the veil had been thicker, and not broken through with several large rents; for I could not help now and then seeing the ugly faces of two big fellows, like giants compared with the little elves and fairies of the upper region. They were really but human, and thrust their heads into my realm of playful imagination. I know them both, for they were mortals and sinners whom I had met every day in this world—forms of ignorance and wickedness too familiar in the midst of us. One is a stupid, filthy, brutish lout, with bleared eyes, blotted nose, and blubber lips, whose voice is sometimes like the growling, sometimes like the howling, of a savage beast. He wears scarcely any clothes, never washes or combs himself, and can hold no tool in his hands. The other is more manly in shape and gesture, but his face is full of hatred; there is evil pride in his eyes, and cruelty in his dreadful mouth, which is always opening, with its rows of sharp teeth, for a feast of human flesh. He wears a helmet, the fashion of which he changes from time to time; one year it is like the head-dress of a Russian soldier, the next year like a French, an Austrian, or a Prussian; just now, as I saw him, it was a helmet with a metal spike at the top. My dear children, let us hate the doings of those two Bad Ones among mankind; for the name of the first is Intemperance, and the name of the second is War!"

"But I shall not speak any more of them; I will tell you of the strange little separate world, up in the air above the clouds, where I saw how and why the gathering of all the funny persons for the pantomime was attended by some rare performers.

"It was a country which is called the Kingdom of Chancifancia; and the chief thing in that country is a great living creature, partly like an immense bird, but partly like an enormous snake; the brooding hen-dragon, named Whimsicalia, which hatches the huge egg Whatanot; but, instead of sitting close upon it, oftener hovers on the top of it, near enough to prevent its getting cold. This dragon, which can fly, but does not fly till its egg shall be hatched, served as a steed for his Majesty, King Goblolly, the sovereign lord of Chancifancia; he cannot be said to be its ruler, for he is so weak and foolish that there was mere anarchy throughout his dominions. He has two large eyes, with two holes cut, for them to look through, in the front of his nightcap, which is always pulled down for fear of his catching cold; and he has a very large mouth. But he sees nothing, for he is constantly trying to see the air, never gazing at anything solid; and he speaks not a word, because he cannot resolve to shut his lips, so that his utterance is an inarticulate sound, 'Hah! ah! oh! ho!' with slight unmeaning variations.

"Such is the sublime Goblolly, who resembles the supreme deity of the Buddhist worship in Asia. His right hand does what it pleases, and so does his left hand, without consulting his head. The right hand, stretching towards the bright South—for Goblolly always turns his face to the East—permits itself to be made the perch of three dainty little Fairies, one singing and two dancing; while his left hand, reaching far into the cold North, where the Death-wind prowls for his prey on the ice-plains, insanely clutches another favourite of the most opposite character—a

meagre, dismal, frowning wizard named Glumbug, who scowls from his wintry corner, with a bitter fanatical scorn, at the gay and cheerful life of the sunny side. Glumbug was Prime Minister not long ago.

"A little geography is needful to explain the politics of Chancifancia, which are determined by its territorial position. To the south it is bordered, I am glad to say, by the delightful country of Benevolia, a land of green lawns and of limpid streams, flowing with 'sweetness and light,' which is ruled by one law from one capital; and its soil is so fertile and the people are so industrious that it produces an infinite wealth of all things true, beautiful, and good. Thence comes the music—thence comes the pure joy which makes the spiritual fairies dance and sing, even when they alight, in their free and fearless mirth, upon the clumsy fist of the gross Goblolly.

"How different is the condition of the unhappy land of Malvolia! Its frontier, an occasion of frequent strife, is contiguous to that of Chancifancia on the north. It is a gloomy wilderness of volcanic mountains, the horrid peaks of which are beset with the chill air of death, while their slopes are clad with slippery ice; and the yawning craters, full of a fire, which burns though it never warms a living body or soul, present a terrible contrast. A fierce mob of lawless spirits, savage in heart and habits, all the family of Vice, Sloth, Greed, Lust, Hate, War, Murder, Waste, Fraud, and Rapine, inhabit this wretched part of the outer world.

"I observed, with sorrow and alarm, that the winged she-dragon Whimsicalia, upon which the idle monarch of Chancifancia was riding, had got her head turned northward, in the direction of Malvolia, by a conceited young frog of a postilion, and would be likely to start off that way, at a fatal pace, so soon as the egg under her maternal charge should be hatched. The consequences would be disastrous to all Chancifancian interests, political, social, and domestic. I felt much concern for the approaching misery of its people, under such an idiot of a King, with such a scoundrel of a Prime Minister—a traitor in Malvolian pay.

"The movements, however, of the animated vehicle which bore the royalty of Chancifancia, still resting upon the unhatched Egg, were yet balanced by the presence of three Ancient Ladies, who used the dragon's tail, now as a rudder, now as an anchor, to keep Whimsicalia in her appointed place. I took them for the Three Fates of Greek mythology. It was some comfort to observe that they sat on the sunny side, looking towards Benevolia, and that two of them had kindly, smiling faces, while the third was sad or serious, but not harsh; and they all looked wise and firm of purpose. The destinies of Goblolly and his subjects would evidently depend much on the resolution of the Fates; unless the Egg Whatanot, beneath his living throne, should prematurely burst with some explosive force of mischief in the unknown contents of its mighty shell. Or else, if the Egg should give birth to a second wild dragon-bird, of the same race as Whimsicalia, there might be danger of the whole atmosphere being lashed into a destructive tempest by the flapping of their vast wings; and their flaming breath would set fire to all the towns of the kingdom. The event was therefore most anxiously awaited, and Christmas, 1870, was the date predicted by astrologers. The important question was, what sort of new bird would come out of the mysterious Egg? Prophetic almanacs had a great sale.

"Now, in these latitudes, between the realms of Benevolia and Chancifancia, lies the fair province of Fairyland, which the Fates, intent upon realities, contrive not to look at, turning their eyes another way. The Fairy nation, an offspring of the Benevolian race, are handsome, clever, and agreeable; but as the sun shines all the year round in their country, with only a few soft refreshing showers at night, when people are asleep, and a few light south-westerly breezes to cool them in the summer days, it is said that the Fairies lead rather an idle life. They have plenty of delicious fruits, which supply all their food without toil or cost; and, by exchanging the surplus of this sweetness with foreign nations, they procure splendid dresses of the most fashionable patterns. They lodge in the endless bowers of their common garden. No Fairy ever does any work, but their time is spent in playing, dancing, singing, and listening to music or pretty stories. They care nothing about the egg Whatanot, or the government of Chancifancia, though a revolution in that adjacent territory would throw all Fairyland into confusion.

"The King and Queen of Fairyland are named Indolio and Fantasia. They walk attended by a Field Marshal, who carries a funny sword, more hilt than blade, with a very tiny shield and a very tall plumed helmet; and by a Court Minstrel, who steps gently behind them, sounding his mandolin. They are an amiable couple, frankly courteous and affectionate. Their sole fault is that lack of decision, of energy and perseverance, which is apt to beset persons born to an easy fortune. Their only child, the lovely Princess Bellinzetta, is the darling of her native country. Her cousin, the brave Prince Generoso, an orphan son of the late King Ingenio, who had preceded his brother Indolio upon the Fairyland throne, was brought up at his royal uncle's Court.

"I need scarcely tell you, Mamma and Flossy, what happened to these two young persons. Of course they fell in love with each other, as the saying is. But let me assure you, my dear girl, that it is possible to believe unwisely in such falling in love. For what was the condition into which Generoso and Bellinzetta had brought themselves, after two or three months of mutual admiration? They had no eyes for any one but each other; no thought, no care, no feeling, no duty, no respect, affection, or service for any other persons. That was a great pity; for Bellinzetta and Generoso had been good to all the people they lived with or met, before their heads were turned with each other's flattery, and before their hearts were narrowed to a jealous monopoly of each other's tenderness. Well, they were both very young, and could not be very wise, for they had never known sorrow, toil, or anxiety, in the idle palace of the Fairyland Court. She forgot to think of her kind parents, and he forgot the duty he owed to his royal

uncle and liege lord. They agreed to elope and get married in a clandestine manner upon the earth inhabited by mortal mankind. The Prince furnished himself with a rope-ladie, a postchaise, and a special license; they came down, travelled to London, and were joined in holy matrimony at a church in this city.

"This very thoughtless pair of truants had not above £20 in their purses, which they spent in less than a fortnight: living at an hotel, feasting on dainties, hiring carriages and horses, taking stalls at the Opera, buying dresses and trinkets, and running into debt. At the end of the honeymoon they had sold their jewellery and other finery, and removed to shabby little rooms, at 16s. a week, behind Tottenham-court-road. Still, they were fond of each other; at least, each told the other so, and each believed it of the other. They daily protested that they were very happy.

"The Princess had now no ladies' maid to wait upon her dressing in the morning. She had her coffee and toast brought to her bedside at ten o'clock, and rose soon after eleven, so as not to be vulgar. It was the Prince who served her, because he loved to show his attachment to his beautiful young wife, and because he had no other work to do. He had been bred as a nobleman and courtier, without the slightest notion of any trade or profession, much as he now wanted money. So he did not leave the house till noon, when Bellinzetta would be ready to take his arm for a stroll down Regent-street, to look at the tempting shops; and, on their way home, they would stop near Oxford-Market to buy a red-herring for their simple dinner.

"But a wonderful thing came to pass, one Friday morning, in the second week of their humble retirement. Prince Generoso, in the little parlour, which opens by a folding-door into the little bed-room, was lounging over the *Daily Telegraph*, when his wife called him in there to lace up her stays. This lady had not been used to wear stays in Fairyland, and was unable to perform the office for herself. As poor lodgers on the second floor, they had no attendance from their landlady and her slut of all drudgery below. Instead of ringing the bell, therefore, our gallant young Prince just did what he was asked. He passed through the folding-door, and left it open.

"Now, this little incident took place at ten minutes past eleven o'clock, at the moment when a party of early visitors, who had arrived in London half an hour before, were coming up stairs. It has been observed that, since their falling in love, this fond youthful couple had 'no eyes but for each other.' This statement is not a metaphor. By a miraculous effect they were actually unable, in certain moods, to see other persons standing in the same room with them in broad daylight. So it was that when an elderly gentleman, with several companions, entered the parlour, and stood right before the open door of the next chamber, neither Generoso nor Bellinzetta became aware of their visitors' presence.

"The leader of this party, when he saw how they had intruded, positively blushed, and almost trembled, with an unaffected manly delicacy, though he knew himself to be unseen, and though he was accompanied, on a mission of charity, by the young lady's own father and mother. He was a hale, active, lively sort of man, in the fifty-ninth year of his age dressed in a velvet scull-cap, peaked doublet of crimson, wide-collar, and short blue mantle, of some quaint antique fashion. His back had a sharp hunch, and his nose and chin were uncommonly long; but these oddities of aspect were over-powered by the charming expression of keen pleasantry which beamed from his rosy face. He would have instantly and noiselessly withdrawn from the room, when he perceived how Generoso and the Princess were occupied; but it was too late. Three more persons—King Indolio, Queen Fantasia, and their inseparable Marshal—had entered with him, almost filling the little parlour; and the Marshal, coming in last, had shut the outer door, which, by virtue of his office, he was bound to keep closed till a formal order from his Majesty should command it to be opened. Mr. Punch, therefore, now finding it impossible to retire, made the best of an awkward situation. Dropping upon one knee, in the attitude of profoundest reverence which befitted an involuntary witness of the unconscious Bellinzetta's toilette, he waited in silence, with her astonished parents and their aged servitor, till she was completely robed and had come into the parlour. Then he stretched forth his right hand, upon the forefinger of which he had a ring of magic diamond, potent to dissolve all falsehood and delusion by its touch of truth. He took the hand of the Princess and joined it with the hand of the Prince, as if to confirm their nuptial union. Their eyes were suddenly cleared; they saw their strange new friend, but they saw also their kind old friends out of Fairyland. Bellinzetta, who had never felt any fear of the anger of her parents, but had inwardly pined to meet them again, when the feverish excitement of her needless flight was past, now rushed, sobbing and weeping, in mingled joy and shame, to her mother's bosom. As for Generoso, he bowed in frank and brave submission before the gentle King, whom he was now heartily sorry to have offended.

"The clear and cheerful voice of Mr. Punch was first heard, addressing both the elders and the youthful pair. 'My dear Fairy friends,' he said, 'let me save you all the pain of any explanation. I know how it is with you all; I have known it all along. Lady Fantasia—I beg your pardon, we are old acquaintance, since before your Majesty was a Queen—you can tell your daughter and her husband, whom I am delighted to see in London, that I am a sort of kinsman of yours and theirs. The English people call me Punch; you always called me Pulcinello in the land of our common ancestors; we are cousins, you know, as near as Fun to Fancy. This dear young couple have not done exactly what I should have advised in making their love affair a runaway match. We'll say no more about that brief mistake, which I am sure they mean to amend, and I know you have kindly forgiven. Your Majesty,' he continued, turning to King Indolio, 'will understand how I have been enabled to watch over their life since they lihted in London. Everything that happens, all that

anybody ever does in this city, is reported at my office. I saw their few short days of careless happiness, while their money lasted; and I have not had the heart to wait for the disappointment, the distress, the remorse and self-reproaches, perhaps the wearing out of love, the disgust and despair, which must soon have attended an imprudent step, when poverty followed their month of too eager pleasure. They had forgotten to send you a message or letter since their departure from home; I have written to relieve your anxiety; you have journeyed down here to fetch them. I trust their future conduct will reward your affection. May you and they be happy a thousand years!' The voice of the good old gentleman here slightly faltered. 'Bless you! bless you, my children!' he fervently exclaimed, holding both hands, in the gesture of benediction, over the two fair young heads, as Generoso and Bellinzetta gratefully sank before him. The King and Queen wept; so did Mr. Punch; so did the Prince and Princess; so did the trusty old Marshal; while the Minstrel, left on the staircase landing outside the parlour, struck up an air of celestial melody on his musical instrument, and all was harmony for ten minutes.

"I need not repeat the talk of this happily reconciled and reunited Fairy family, amidst whose conversation moved the spirit of good Mr. Punch, a glancing light of gay and gentle wisdom. Their fond recollections of the past, mingled with soft regrets, their present assurances of mutual endearment, their hopes, promises, and plans for the future, must remain untold. We are not in Fairyland, but in London. 'And being here,' said Mr. Punch, with fresh alacrity, 'I shall insist upon your all staying with me and Judy, at my house in St. John's-wood, till after Christmas. You shall see all the sights of London; we don't get royal visitors from Fairyland every day.' He instantly sent to the nearest cabstand for a couple of four-wheelers; and in about twenty minutes the King and Queen, the Prince and Princess, with their two Court officials, found themselves perfectly at home in a warm and well-furnished mansion. Good Mrs. Judy is the kindest, the most provident and observant, yet the least fussy, of lady-hostesses. The very tail of Dog Toby wagged a festive welcome in that jovial household. A noon-time breakfast, which you might call your luncheon, consisted of the usual rolls and butter, eggs, ham, sardines, fowl (cold or devilled), kidneys, caviare, and preserved fruits, with choice of tea, coffee, and chocolate, or pale ale or champagne. To all these viands the fairies did ample justice; for the indulgence of their feelings had made them both hungry and thirsty. A gentleman named Cleverton, of the age of Mr. Punch and of prepossessing character and manners, took his place as an unexpected luncheon guest at the table.

Queen Fantasia rose in delight, as Mr. Cleverton was announced and entered. 'I hope you remember, dear Sir,' she said, 'as well as I remember, the time when you visited my dear father, the Duca di Concetto, in our villa in the South Pacific Islands. It was such a happy time! We told stories, we acted plays, we guessed riddles; and yours, Mr. Cleverton, were always the best.'

"Mr. Cleverton bowed, and kissed her Majesty's gracious hand. 'To me,' he replied, 'all but the happiest time of my life. But I am so happy to meet you here now! My one visit to Fairyland, with my good friend Punch, when he and I, for mortals, were very young, was paid too early. The Court and Kingdom of your Majesty, now turning to King Indolio, had not yet been blessed with its fairest ornament. I have not had the pleasure of seeing Queen Fantasia since she left the home of her noble sire.'

"You must come and see us in the Easter holidays," answered the Fairy King; 'My poor brother Ingenio, whom you used to meet at Concetto's, has often talked of you and Signor Pulcinello. But I am told, Mr. Cleverton, that you have some connections, in business and diplomacy, with our aerial kingdoms?'

"Mr. Punch smiled, as he spoke to this question for his friend. 'Cleverton,' he said, 'is lessee and acting manager of the Royal Hilarity Theatre, Trafalgar-square. He knows more of the kingdom of Chancifancia, I dare say, than the Minister of Foreign Affairs in your Majesty's adjacent realm. If we are going to talk politics, let us move into my library for a cigar.'

"While the three ladies went out on a shopping expedition, Mr. Punch had soon put his male friends at their ease in the great leather arm-chairs by the fire, surrounded by four walls of shelves loaded with his favourite classics, and with the ten thousand folio volumes of patristic divinity, scholastic philosophy, physics and metaphysics, aesthetics and cosmetics, in which he is deeply versed. 'Now for it,' said he to Mr. Cleverton. 'Tell his Majesty your political views.'

"I scarcely yet know my own position and prospects," said that gentleman, with regard to Chancifancia. I have large estates in that country, and am even an adoptive member of its peerage, thanks to the influence of the kind Fates and of my Lady Whimsicalia. The Royal Hilarity is nominally conducted under the patronage of the Sovereign of Chancifancia; but it really owes nothing to King Gobbloly.

"I should think not!" exclaimed Punch; 'a lump of imbecility and stupidity, deaf and dumb, blind and paralytic; the motionless, senseless, worse than useless burden of our nimble Whimsicalia; the clumsy puppet of that sly hypocrite old Glumbug, who has betrayed the State to Malvolio! I should like to see a Revolution up there!'

"Not so fast, my dear fellow," Mr. Cleverton replied. 'I regret the condition of affairs up there as much as you do. The better part of my private fortune is invested in Benevolian bonds; a cordial alliance of Chancifancia with Benevolia is essential to the success of my schemes. I don't mind telling you that it was only to promote this alliance, by proving that it would gain the favour of a London theatrical audience, and of the London newspaper critics, that I set up as manager of the Royal Hilarity; not for the sake of a money profit. I only pretend, in public, to make it a pecuniary speculation, like other managers or lessees, because the world doesn't allow men

to be disinterested. If he professes any other motive than lucre or ambition, he is set down as either fool or rogue.' He continued: 'I have lately bought up the lease, goodwill, and properties of a rival theatre, the Panjandrum, in Leicester-square, which you know was a vulgar concern. I am puzzled what to do with such materials as the Panjandrum properties, and some of the Panjandrum company, very queer figures and uncouth actors, whom I am bound to employ till the end of their term. I am busy with my dramatic author, contriving our Christmas Pantomime—I mean, of course, the Romantic Extravaganza, which should end in the Pantomime capers of Harlequin and Columbine, and in the drolleries of Clown and Pantaloons. What can we do with a set of performers who are as dull as brute animals, and only fit to play the parts of beasts and birds? We shall arrange for a Zoological Christmas Piece. Mr. Wombwell Jones, the playwright, will invent parts for them all. He has got all the plot in his head; the minor incidents, scenes, and dialogues he can knock off in a week. There will be the brave Man-Lion, a magnificent fellow in war, but in time of peace so silly as to fall in love with a baby's bauble. There will be the huge Man-Mastiff, the Man-Eagle, the Men-Frogs, a Man-Jackass, and a ferocious Man-Dragon, whose gaping maw is to swallow the leaping Sprites. Horns, manes, and tails, goats'-beards and cocks'-combs, all such ornamental animal excrescences, may be dispensed among the company with their half-human attire, to produce a comical effect. But I am not satisfied with this range of characters. Bestial figures alone will not do. I want something more refined, something higher—the elements of superhuman grace, spiritual beauty, nobleness, and moral sweetness, to be opposed to that grotesque mixture, like the satyr's, of the animal and human natures. I would introduce nymphs, Greek gods and goddesses, or German and British fairies, if I only knew where to get them.' Mr. Cleverton stopped, and mused over his theatrical difficulties in silence.

"We are fond of acting plays in Fairyland," said Prince Generoso. 'I know that Bellinzetta and I never had such fun as when we helped to get up a play last year. We have been to Drury Lane, and the Queen's, and the Strand, and the Gaiety, and nearly all the others in London since we arrived. What a spree it would be for us to perform one night in your company at the Royal Hilarity! Oh, my eye! what a spree!'

"The manager's eye flashed with sudden exultation. 'By Jove!' he exclaimed, in rapture; 'what a splendid advertisement! A fairy extravaganza, with REAL FAIRIES ON THE STAGE! If you put the real anything on the stage, a real Hansom cab with real horse, or a real boat in real water, the play is sure to have a run.' How much more with a real Fairy Prince and Princess!'

"But Mr. Punch looked grave; he was alarmed by this turn of the conversation. Adroitly dissembling, he seemed merely to anticipate, in a joking way, the objections to that which he would not regard as a serious proposal. 'It would be a pretty scandal for the Opposition party in Fairyland to gloat over,' he said, 'that the King's son and daughter had turned public play-actors at a London theatre! The Royal dignity!—'

"Bother the Royal dignity!" said King Indolio, puffing his cigar. 'We're here now to enjoy ourselves; and, I say, let Genny and Bellinzy do as they like. They got married without asking leave, and they shan't ask leave for anything else.'

"Gracious Sire!" cried Mr. Punch, 'Your Majesty surely would not consent to such a proceeding? Public opinion—the political situation!—'

"I hate politics," said Indolio, 'I want to be amused. I was not made King to be bored. Mr. Cleverton, you may ask my wife about it. If she says Yes, I say Yes. If Fantasia likes to take a part herself!—'

"No, for Heaven's sake!" Mr. Punch exclaimed. 'Your Majesty does not know the malice of our sordid world, or the disloyalty that lurks in your own kingdom. Fairyland, allow me to remind you, though endowed with self-government by the policy of the Benevolian Empire, is not an independent State. It is under the suzerainty of Chancifancia, whose incapable Monarch is guided by the wicked Glumbug; and he only seeks a pretext to make war, and stir up a rebellion against you!—'

"This remonstrance was interrupted by a servant, who came and handed to Mr. Punch an envelope containing a Reuter's telegram. He read it aloud:—'Revolution Chancifancia Deposition Gobbloly Flight Glumbug President Republic Cleverton Whatanot Egg Whimsicalia Royal Hilarity London.'

"The countenance of Punch, as he read this, beamed with a generous joy. 'All is saved,' he remarked to his guests. 'It is well for both our worlds. Dear old Cleverton, I earnestly congratulate you on this high but deserved advancement!'

"Dear old Punch! dear good friend!" modestly replied the other. 'It does not take me quite by surprise. My agents in Chancifancia have written daily. I feel the responsibility, but I shall try to do my duty. This only, about the Egg Whatanot, I do not yet understand. But I must go instantly to the theatre; I fear the Special Envoys of the new Republic are kept waiting. My secretary would send for me to my house or to the Garrick Club—anywhere but here at this hour. Come with me, Punch, I want your aid and counsel. King Indolio, I believe myself now authorised, in the name of the Senate and Council of Chancifancia, to invite your Majesty officially to bear us company, and his Royal Highness the Prince too.'

"They all rose, and hastily started for Trafalgar-square. In Oxford-circus they stopped the cab to set down Generoso, who was to fetch the three ladies, by appointment, from the Soho Bazaar. At the corner of the street was Mr. Quidnunc, who eagerly accosted Punch and Cleverton. 'Have you heard the news?' he said. 'What is it?' said they. 'He answered solemnly,

"The Oracle has declared what the Fates have decreed. In the Royal Hilarity Nest must the Egg Whatanot be hatched. (Sensation.)

"Cleverton was profoundly thoughtful at this announce-

ment. They drove quickly on. When they came within sight of his theatre, they were suddenly amazed to see its wondrous transformation. The roof of that building was now surmounted by a vast dome, of brilliant white colour and oval in form. Above this hovered a gorgeous cloud, like the ever-varying glories of sunrise, and displayed an incessant change from one rich hue to another, as when the rays of light are dissolved and recombined in the masses of vapour. But the shape of this cloud was 'dragonish,' and it was easy to recognise the broad wings, the fantastic head, the flashing eyes, the serpentine blazing tail of the mighty WHIMSICALIA. Nay, upon the front of the edifice, beneath the golden words 'Royal Hilarity' was another inscription, painted in fire, 'Temple of Whimsicalia.' The lessee and manager was astonished.

"He entered, and was met in the vestibule by the waiting delegates of Chancifancia. They were the noblest and wisest among the loyal and patriotic citizens of that long-troubled land. They hailed him as the Elect Chief of the State. The deputation was of both sexes, for womanhood suffrage and political qualification had been one fruit of the late revolution. A witch, named Dame Whitton, came with them; a shrewd and shrewish female, the bitter foe of Glumbug, but who had herself been rather inclined to Malvolian interests till Mr. Cleverton had converted her to the Benevolian party. She satirically related the recent transactions in the upper world. It appears that the subjects of King Gobbloly at last found out the real nature of their ancient Sovereign. They knew, long before, that he could not speak to them, or do anything for them; but they had supposed he could hear their petitions. The final discovery was made by an indiscreet Fairy messenger, who climbed up close to the hole of his ear, and, finding it deaf to her shouting and screaming, pricked it with a pin. The plump form of Gobbloly proved devoid of feeling; he was, in fact, a mere stuffed effigy artificially composed, like one made of painted canvas filled with sand; the sighing noise from his open mouth was produced by the wind of a bellows, worked by Glumbug's order. The disgrace and exile of that Minister followed.

"The theatrical company assembled in the green-room. Only one, a coarse, drunken bully, who had been wont to claim the King's part in plays at the Panjandrum, was in a sulky state of beer, squatting alone in a Malvolian corner; while a Man-Frog strove in vain to rouse him by drenching his head with cold water and pulling his hair. Mother Whitton took her broom, and swept all uncleanness from the stage floor. Presently arrived the august fairy ladies, with Prince Generoso, in Mrs. Judy's carriage. The gathering of players had begun.

"A rainbow, striking its base through the window, formed a ladder down which came a host of lovely little figures, singing, laughing, capering, and clapping their hands. They were Fairies, sent to take part in the Pantomime Extravaganza, by command of the temporary government in Fairyland. The rule of that country, during the absence of King Indolio, but without prejudice to his royalty, was administered by a commission from the Benevolian Empire. Great reforms had commenced; public edifices, the post office and telegraph and railroads, arts and manufactures, ships and trade, showed the progress of social improvement; the Fairies were busy, yet freer and happier than ever! Those who now descended into the theatre crowded with affectionate loyalty about their King and Queen and the Princess. They brought the royal wardrobe; Fantasia put on a robe of purple satin, gold-embroidered, with a superb head-dress, diamond-circled, from which hung, on each side, a rich lace veil; Bellinzetta had a bridal dress of white satin, studded with emeralds, rubies, and pearls. Indolio shone like a King, and Generoso like a courtly knight. The other Fairies wore dresses of azure silk or green velvet, decorated with patterns of flowers. Amongst them were two or three Benevolians, in cloth of gold and silver. Their sweet temper, their exquisite urbanity, their sprightly and gentle behaviour, won every heart. Wherever a lady of this nation walked, love went before her and peace followed behind her. The Chancifancians were dressed in a diversity of motley colours.

"The stage was now prepared as if for a rehearsal, but merely to hold a parade of the theatrical forces, that the manager might arrange with the playwright for their respective parts. The pit was crowded with men of the literary and artistic professions; amongst whom I noticed Alfred Crowquill, the Special Artist, and Roger Acton, the Special Reporter, of the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS. There was some little confusion, owing to the difference of sizes in the performers; but their stature was easily altered to suit each other. The tiniest Butterfly-Fairies were frightened at the big Man-Mastiff, till Mr. Cleverton pulled off his dog-mask, and showed them he was only a man, who wanted to kiss them, not to eat them. But the illumination of the theatre was a new wonder. Instead of gas chandeliers, an immense convexity of a semi-transparent thin substance, resembling porcelain, was suspended from the entire width of the ceiling. This was, indeed, the lower half of the mystic Egg, whose upper half formed the dome outside. It was here suffused, as the house-warming proceeded, with a delicious rosy light.

"Orchestral and choral music, in alternate bursts of brief enchanting melody, preluded a happy event. The sense of harmony prevailed awhile; next rose the spirit of glee. In the huge interior of the Egg was heard a sound of cachinnation, faintly beginning, rapidly increasing, till it broke in exulting peals of joyous thunder. The vast shell was cracked; a beak, two bright eyes, a pair of mighty claws, emerged from the opening. A Bird, one of stupendous size and strength, but of a kind less perilous than its parent Whimsicalia, was born in that auspicious moment. Its species is the MERRY THOUGHT FOWL. Its proper name is FUN!!!

"Oh, Uncle Ned!" cried Flossy and Teddy both at once. "Thanks for your story," said their mother. "Here's a cup of tea. The children must go to bed."

"Good-night, my dearest little Flossy! Good-night, dear little Teddy! We'll go to see the Pantomime to-morrow."

R. A.

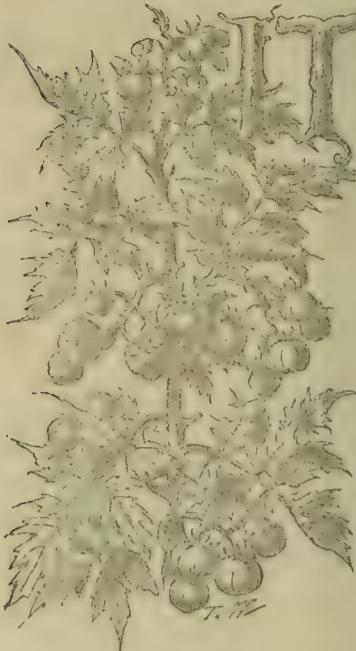


A VISION OF THE DEPARTING YEAR.—DRAWN BY E. J. POYNTER, A.R.A.

THE DEATH-SHIP OF TRESACAT COVE.

BY E. LYNN LINTON.

CHAPTER I.



WAS a bright September day, when there were no fish in the bay, and when there was plenty of drift seaweed on the shore; so most of the men and some of the women living in Trescat Cove turned out to rake in those glistening long brown ribbons, which, when laid on the land, were to give them good turnip crops and a fine potato harvest. They were a merry set—at least the young ones were; though the Cornish fisherman, seemingly saddened by his hard fight with nature for bare life, and awed by the tremendous scenes among which he lives, is by no means noticeably

light-hearted—oppressed, too, as he is by superstitions, gloomy, terrible, and tender. Still, even he sometimes shakes off his natural gravity, and is as gay as the best. And they were a hand-some set, too, with a dark-eyed, Spanish kind of beauty; the men clean-limbed, bronzed, and with sensitive, speculative faces; the women rich, tender, noble. But the loveliest woman of them all, if the poorest, was Mary Pearn, that olive-skinned, picturesque-looking girl, who lived with her widowed mother in a miserable little hut at the end of the hamlet; and perhaps the happiest man, as he was the richest, was young George Martin, who had been sweethearing Mary for the last two years or more—unsuccessfully.

To-day, however, Mary seemed in a more amiable humour. She had allowed George to help her more than once in her work, though in general she was as stiff as a fluke when he came near her, and looked as though she would have broken her back, he used to say, rather than let him lend her a hand; and when a man has courted as long as George had done, and has made no way, any sign that he has drawn ever so little ahead is welcomed, and a word more tender, a look less cold than usual, makes the dullest day bright and the most toilsome work a pleasure.

Mary's life was a hard one at this time, though no one in the Cove knew how hard. Young George Martin was far away the best match of the place; and, poor as she and her mother were, without ever a man belonging to them to help them to live, and only a small share in one of the boats, no one could understand why she so persistently refused him. He was a handy fellow and well-looking in a way, and he was fond of her, as every one knew; but the girl, a proud, high-spirited, rough-headed little gipsy, as fierce as a mountain cat and as haughty as a queen, would not hear of him as a lover; and she would give no reason why—unless, indeed, her last answer to all the urgings wherewith it was sought to influence her, "I don't like him and I won't have him," could be called a reason. Once, and once only, she had said to her mother, when closely pressed, "I don't trust George Martin, mother; he's a liar like his father, and I have no fancy for liars." But to-day, while they were raking in seaweed, she was, as I have said, less than usually ungracious to him; and George began to think that at last his patience and forbearance were to win the day, and that the wish of his heart, so long desired, was to be granted before too late.

Mary Pearn, though as true as steel, was but a woman; and, being a woman, George Martin's long and ardent wooing began to make its mark. He had borne all her floutings, all her petty insolence and girlish tempers, with such wonderful forbearance; he had been so forgiving and so patient that, although his very humility towards her at times annoyed her and made her behave still worse to him, yet, when she came to think of it, she could not but feel grateful to him; and more than once of late she had begun to wonder whether she was not throwing away the substance for the shadow, and to ask herself whether, George Martin's love being a fact, and his home, and his earnings, and her mother's infirmities, and their poverty, being facts too, she was wise in waiting year after year—four years now—for one who had gone and made no sign—who had vanished out of the sight and knowledge of them all, like a mist-wreath dissolving into thin air; and who, for aught she knew, might now be lying dead at the bottom of the sea, or married and settled in some distant clime, and passed out of her horizon for ever. Besides, he had said nothing definite to her before he went away on his last voyage. He had, to be sure, looked a good deal, and hinted more; and, taught by her own heart, she had believed more than she had been told, and trusted before he had vowed. Still, there was nothing absolute between them, and if she loved, she loved unmasked and unpromised. So, was it wise, she asked herself, to give the go-by to George, as she did, when she might put her mother into a good home, for what was, perhaps, a fancy of her own, after all, and no reality?

This was the reason, then, why she was a little less ungracious than usual to him to-day; as this also had been the reason why his wooing had hitherto sped so ill; and why Mary could tell no one—mother, friend, nor George himself—how it was she had held him off, yet had no one else on; and why—bright, young, and healthy as she was, and so poor, so wanting the support of a man for herself and her mother—he seemed bent on becoming an old maid for life. If any-

one guessed how things stood with her it was Jose Cirno's father and mother; and they had, maybe, seen a little into the state of things before Jose went away, and maybe inferred still more from Mary's affectionate behaviour to them since—now that Jose himself was not to be had, his parents being the dearest things she knew. But if they guessed they kept silence, and Mary's secret was safe from the knowledge and gossip of the Cove.

Suddenly Mary got quite close to George Martin, and spoke to him with a strange familiarity of look and manner. If George had had eyes for anything but the false glimmer of his own hopes, he would have guessed something of the truth from the flush of shame and anger together that came on her face as a coarsely handsome, countrified kind of gentleman came riding down the winding cliff road and on to the sands where the men were working. This was Squire Trescat, of Glentrescat, the naked, treeless white house on the slope of the hill, and the only man of means, save the Vicar, belonging to the parish. He was married, but his wife, of better birth than himself, was both plain and sickly, and they had no children. He had been in the army at one time of his life; his character was none of the best; he was bold, brave, and coarse; he had a keen eye for beauty; and, having this keen eye, he had cast it on Mary Pearn.

Between the Squire and old Daniel Martin, George's father, was a silent feud of long standing. It dated many years back, from quite smuggling times, when Martin, then in the prime of his life, had run one among many other illegal ventures, and young Trescat gave information to the Preventive men. And it had continued up to the present day, when this same Martin, now the richest fisherman of the Cove, stood out as the representative of the rest against the Squire's claims to the foreshore rights, Mr. Trescat having rented from the "Duke of Cornwall" the strip of coast which bounded his property, and being prepared to use the advantages which the law gave him. Hitherto the fishermen had helped themselves to all that the winds and the waves brought up into their Cove; and they could not be made to understand that waifs and strays did not belong to the man who, perhaps, risked his life to get them. Now they were to be held under a different régime than the loose one of old days; and it was notified to them that Squire Trescat claimed the foreshore rights all the same as if he had been the Duke or the Crown in person, and that he meant to enforce them. And the Cove men, with Martin at their head, denied those rights, and swore they would not respect them.

The feud had not, however, touched the manners of the people; and, indeed, the Squire was just one of those familiar coarse-mannered gentlemen who are not personally unpopular, though not much respected; so that, when he rode on to the sands, the men nodded to him as he trotted past, and flung him their "good day" more or less civilly, as it might chance. And among the rest, "Good day to you, Squire!" said old Dan Martin, smoothly.

But the look he cast up from under his shaggy eyebrows was not quite so pleasant as his voice.

"Good morning, Martin!" said Mr. Trescat, roughly, with a quick glance sent roving among the workers, as if he was looking for some one. When he caught sight of Mary Pearn, raking up the seaweed by George Martin's side, and speaking to him in that strangely familiar manner, leaning on her rake and laughing up into his face—looking like Romney's picture of Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante—his glance rested there, and his face grew a dusky crimson.

"Is your son making up to Mary?" he asked, rudely.

"Mary'll get a good one if he is," answered Martin in his smooth way, smiling.

"You think so, of course; I think the girl a match for his betters," said Mr. Trescat, hastily.

"May be, if they could be found," Martin replied, still smiling, so far as lips went, and still with that covert fierceness of look beneath his shaggy eyebrows.

Mr. Trescat gave his unoffending horse a cut with the whip that made the poor beast start and plunge. Then he said, in a high and angry voice, "Martin, I want you to understand about my lease. I intend to carry it out on the first occasion, so I give you all-warning. The foreshore rights are mine, and you fellows can only claim salvage."

"You think so, Squire?" said Martin, quietly but determinedly. "And I say use goes before papers. I deny your right from first to last; the boys are at my back, and we'll fight you in every court of law you like to take us to. You've got what you can't hold; and, if you give me warning, I give it you back—we'll fight it out to the end."

"And you'll get cast, you fool; fools all of you! And when you are ruined all round, don't blame me, but your own pigheadedness," said the Squire, irritably, as he put his horse forward, and rode to where Mary was raking in the weed. "Well, Mary," he said, in a more amiable voice, but still not quite himself, "so I see you and George here have been making it up together, hey? We'll soon have the wedding breakfast, I suppose!"

Mary's eyes flashed, and her olive skin flushed. "It's a pity people take so much notice of what don't concern them!" she said, pertly, for she was pert at times. But George, being a fool where his love was concerned, looked pleased enough; and, thinking any help worth having, was by no means particular who it was that helped him, or how, provided only he was helped on.

"If girls don't want to be taken notice of they should not let young men follow after them," said the Squire. Then he added quickly, "Mrs. Trescat wants to see you at Glentrescat, Mary; she wants to see you this evening."

"I will not come," said Mary, sullenly. "My duty to the lady, and I cannot come," she added, mending her manners and dropping a courtesy.

"I don't think I shall take that message, my girl," the Squire said slowly. "You will show your duty to one who is so kind to you, and to your mother, by doing what she wishes better than by messages of excuse. I shall tell her you will

come—in the evening, mind, after seven o'clock." And with that he rode off; and the men flung "good day" at him again as he passed.

The ostensible meaning of the message was this. Mrs. Trescat, a good, weak woman, earnest in all things she considered right, but with never a ray of common-sense to guide her, was trying to teach Mary lacemaking. And Mary did her best to learn, feeling that if she refused George Martin, with his boats and his father's reputed wealth, she owed it to her mother to work hard at anything that might turn up, and catch at any straw that might keep their heads above water. But lacemaking for a girl who gathers in seaweed and goes out knee-deep into water for shrimps and shell-fish; who cleans fish by thousands, and salts pilchards by hogsheads, was not very likely work. So it progressed but badly, being too entirely out of harmony with the rough and vigorous habits of the Cove to make part of the life's work there. And of late, since one moonless night, not so very long ago, when the Squire had met her in the garden, as she was leaving, Mary had apparently given up all effort to learn, and had not been to Glentrescat for a lesson. At which Mrs. Trescat was naturally annoyed, seeing in this defection a proof of idleness, or, at least, a proof of coarseness of taste; a sign that the girl, who seemed so sweet and nice, in spite of her fiery spirit and broad accent and rough black head, and who was almost as if she had the makings of a lady in her, with care, liked the grosser association of the men of her own class better than the refined society and teachings of a gentlewoman. And all ladies resent this in their poorer sisters. Had she known the truth of matters she would probably have changed her opinion.

Presently Mr. Trescat came riding back again.

"I forgot," he said, in his loud voice; "Mrs. Trescat sent you this, Mary, for your mother." And he stooped from his horse and gave her half a crown ostentatiously.

Tears of rage came into the girl's eyes. "I don't want it, Sir," she said, huskily. "Take back your money, Mr. Trescat; I do not need it."

But for all answer the Squire patted her under the chin with a familiar kind of patronage that made Mary long to strangle him.

"Tut, tut! little girl," he said. "What need of so much fuss to-day about the matter? It is not the first and it will not be the last that you and your mother have had from Glentrescat. If you do not want it to buy a ribbon for yourself, take it to buy food for her; do you hear?"

"We don't let them want, Sir," said George Martin, a little too humbly.

The Squire laughed unpleasantly. "I believe you," he said. "It is not likely that the man who is courting the daughter will let the mother starve."

"No, Sir; that's just it," said George; "and she doesn't want for aught we can do for her or get her."

Poor Mary, between the Scylla and Charybdis of her lovers, with their public help, grew strangely distracted, and wished them both among the rocks yonder, face downwards. She felt humiliated for Jose's sake as well as for her own; yet why for his? Still, between the two, if she must have one, she would rather have it known that George helped her. At the worst, he was one of her own kind; and she, like all the poor, thought help among each other brought neither glory to the giver nor shame to the receiver. When it comes to taking money from a married Squire who meets you in his garden on a moonless night, and wants to give you a kiss against your will—it was well Mrs. Trescat knew no more of her husband's ways than if she had been a baby—the thing is very different. So Mary looked at George with wonderful kindness, and let the Squire see her look; the instant after raising her eyes to his with a pretty mixture of boldness and shyness, as she said frankly, yet with her face on fire all the same, "Yes, Sir, they all help us; George here is the best."

On which the Squire rode off again, with a muttered oath at them both.

"Are you going to take me at last, Mary?" said George, when the Squire had fairly gone, and drawing near to her.

"I might take a worse, perhaps," said Mary, softly; her head full of the shrubbery, and the half-crown, and those wicked looks; and thinking, not unreasonably, that it would be better for her to be a wife and protected, than as she was now—with those dreadful lessons in lacemaking to be undertaken.

George took her hand between both of his and pressed it. True, both his and hers were wet and soiled with seaweed; but perhaps there is, after all, as much love between hands soiled by labour as between those which meet and press in kid gloves. The young man was supremely happy, for he felt that now he was safe. Mary Pearn was not the girl to fling abroad kind words at random; but Mary, looking pale and scared, her dark eyes dim with sudden tears, went off to where old Carne, Jose's father, was working; and George Martin got no more out of her for this day.

When evening came Mary "cleaned" herself and mounted the hill which led up to Glentrescat. To-day was Monday; and on Monday a kind of tumbledown old omnibus came past the bend of the field-road that led down to the Cove, taking passengers from Penzance, the metropolis of the district, to the little village of St. Mary, which lay about four miles beyond Trescat Church Town. Walking slowly, feeling very sad and sorry, sorely perplexed with her life, and not knowing what to do between her mother's needs and the Squire's importunities, George Martin's love and Jose's image, the poor girl mounted the steep cliff road, her face bent gloomily downward, and her lithe figure looking loose and limp with the trouble that lay on her; and as she walked she heard the clatter of the horses' hoofs as they trotted—wearily enough, poor brutes!—over the last miles of their long journey.

A sailor was on the crowded roof, lying among the luggage, and singing snatches of popular songs more gay, perhaps, than nice. He was a broad-browed, fair-haired man, in the prime of life, with a bushy brown beard and moustache, and a pair of the frankest blue eyes that ever looked out of a

human head. It was a face that you would have instinctively trusted wherever you had met it; while his strength was of that kind men involuntarily respect and women secretly adore. He was familiar with the passengers, because he was so happy; and he told them that he had just come home after a four-years' absence; that he was out on the spree for the present, and should see his mother and father to-night. And then he picked up his bundle, stuffed his gay bandana handkerchief further into his bosom, bade them all good-night, as if they were old friends, and scrambled down from his lofty perch just as Mary crossed the granite stile and came out on to the road.

"Mary, is that you?" said a rich, full, manly voice; and the girl, putting both her hands in his, answered, in tones that were in themselves a caress, "Jose! home again, at last!"

The next minute the sailor was holding her in his arms, kissing her pale, wet face—pale and tearful from joy; and the love which had been cherished for all these years unspoken needed no more expression than that kiss.

And now all fear of the Squire, of George, of her mother's poverty, all her own perplexity, fell from Mary's heart; and she, as George had done not so many hours ago, felt safe and rewarded. As she clung about the strong, brave man who had come at last to claim her, it scarcely seemed as if the earth was the same to-night it had been this morning.

"Oh, but I am happy!" she kept saying again and again; and Jose echoed, "Ay, and I am happy too, my girl—*too* happy, I might say."

CHAPTER II.

Great was the rejoicing at Trescat Cove that night, when Jose Carne came home with Mary Peard by his side. I am afraid many a man had a dizzy head next morning from the strength of the stuff Polwheeler, at the Swan, sold for good healths and glasses round. The fisher folk cling closely together, and are only happy amongst each other. Besides, Jose was a general favourite, and he had saved money. It was known that he had nearly two hundred pounds in the bank; and, as the good luck of one is taken very much as the good luck of all, the return of one of their young men with a few pence in his pockets is a thing naturally much delighted in: as to-night at Trescat Cove when Jose Carne came back. For now it was assumed that, of course, he would settle down among them quietly for life. He had served his ten years in the Navy, and henceforth he would be a fisherman like themselves, if so be he did not choose the coastguard service. And most likely he would not, but would take to the seine fishing, and build a boat of his own, and marry and have children, and be a man among men, and help his native place all he could. And more than one speculated as to which girl he would take; and some gave him the "officer's daughter"—pretty, dressy, flirting Henrietta Allan, who, because her father was a coastguardsman, gave herself the airs of a lady; but she was a "sad, wild piece," they said, and not fit to be an honest man's wife; and some said Mary Peard, for all that she was so poor and had to go out shrimping and gathering in seaweed for her living. But, in the first place, poverty among fishermen is not a disgrace, for they are all poor; and then Mary was a good girl, and had kept her head high and her name clean. So many thought it would be Mary Peard; and, indeed, some of them got a sudden enlightenment of wits as to the reason why George Martin's suit had not prospered.

George himself came to know the truth only the next day. Looking in at Mary's cottage on his way to his boat, thinking it wise to strike while the iron was hot, and intending, therefore, to speak to her seriously once again, and ask her, as so often before, to be his wife, he saw Jose Carne sitting by the fire, smoking, and Mary's chair drawn close to his, while the work she held in her hands was held there more in pretence of doing something than for any amount really got through. George entered in a pleasant frame of mind enough—humble, if in earnest, and desperately in love—but when he saw Jose sitting there, in that familiarity of attitude which said so much more than the familiarity of their ordinary manners among each other, his passion rose as his hopes fell, and he swaggered forward with an indescribable air of bravado, of mastership, and custom, as if he had as much right to the girl's society as the best of them could claim.

Mary flushed to the roots of her tangled, curled black hair—partly from a woman's natural anger at the affront implied, but partly also from shame and conscience; and Jose looked up with a good-humoured kind of surprise, as a sailor would before knowing that he had cause to be angry.

"You don't mean Jose to cut me out, Mary?" said George, with an unpleasant laugh; "and after yesterday, too!"

"After yesterday! What nonsense are you after, George?" flamed out Mary (she could only face it out now, she thought). "What was there in yesterday that Jose should not be sitting here with me?" And she laid her hand on the scarred and freckled hand of her lover.

George laughed again. "Well, that's rare!" he cried, sneeringly. "And after all you said when we were carting weed!"

"Don't believe him, Jose, my dear!" pleaded Mary. "George Martin's his father's son, and we all know what Dan's word is worth when it suits him to speak with two sides to his tongue." She turned round again as she said this, and faced George Martin fiercely.

"Don't you be afraid, Mary, my dear," said Jose, tranquilly. "It would take more than George to make me think an ill word of you. But I don't see much call that you've got to be here at all, George, when I'm at home." He rose slowly, as he said this, and with a certain shouldering attitude, suggestive enough; and so George Martin understood it.

"No offence, Jose," he said, with his father's smile. "It was only my nonsense. You see, I fancied Mary, and I thought she fancied me. Come now, Mary, weren't you glad to make up to me, yesterday, before the Squire? Come, now. Good Lord! but you did. Whether you stand to it or no, you did; and you know you did!"

"And if I did?" burst out Mary, her eyes flashin' fire.

"Well, then, there's no more to be said!" interrupted George. "You did, and that's all about it; and you made up to me before the Squire for your own story, and not for mine. However, Jose, if she says 'No' to me now, and you are sitting there, I've no more to say. I made a mistake, that's all; and the best of us may do that, any day of the week."

And on this he walked out of the cottage, and so down the rough-hewn steps cut in the cliff to his boat, and no one saw him again for that day. And when he had gone Mary went and sat on Jose's knee, and told him everything—all she had thought and all she had felt, and what she had feared for her mother, and what she had not dared to hope for herself; a poor little story, told in her own rude dialect, which I must not attempt to give if I would be understood by my readers; but which, odd words, queer grammar, half-hinted rather than detailed as it all was, was quite explanatory to Jose, and as eloquent as anything that Shakespeare ever wrote. She told him, too, about Squire Trescat and his bold ways; and at this Jose swore till he half-frightened her, accustomed as she was to hear rough words and angry voices among the men. George Martin's wooing had not troubled him much; he was one of themselves, and it was all fair play, man with man, and the best to win; and if George had fancied her, that was only to be expected; for how could he help it? thought Jose, with a tender heart for that curly, little, rough, black head, and dark eyed, olive-coloured face; and no harm done to any but himself, the boy! But when it was a gentleman and a married man coming his foolery on a dark night among the trees in a grand garden, and making use of his lady's kindness to catch her when she couldn't help herself—a girl without ever a man belonging to her to see her righted—and his own girl, too—then the sailor's quick blood boiled fiercely enough, and Mary was half sorry she had told him.

And yet it was best to be honest, she thought. She was to be Jose's wife, and she would have no secrets from him. Besides, what could Squire Trescat do against him? If he hated him ever so, he could not harm him. The Cove men were sturdy, brave, and independent, and wanted nothing of man or lord. They had their quarrel with the Squire on public grounds, because of these new rights of his, that he said he had flensed from over their heads and under their feet, as they might say; but further than this the feud did not go, and it did not sink into a personal quarrel with any but old Daniel Martin; so it was all one to them whether the Squire liked or disliked them; and, as they held nothing at his hand, they cared no more for his favour than for his disfavour.

With which reasoning, spoken in a roundabout way and oddly put, Jose and Mary were satisfied; and Jose determined he would show on which side the land lay when next the Squire rode down to the Cove, and patted Mary under the chin at the price of half a crown.

If they had looked farther ahead they would have seen more reason to fear George than the rich man of the square white house; but they never thought of quieting their souls with reasons showing his harmlessness. "Folks never do see the rocks ahead, unless the breakers over them are as white as milk," said Jose once, when a philosophising fit was on him. He might have repeated his own words to-day when he stood in Mary's kitchen, and kissed her and told her not to be afraid; he would take care of her against twenty squires! Any way, between Squire and mate he found his hands pretty full, now that he had come home, with his pockets well lined, to wed the girl he had believed in so much that he had not thought her promise necessary for even a four years' absence.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Trescat was furious, his wife was annoyed; the one swore the jade should never enter his house again, the other sighed and said she must give her up to her own bad courses—sorry that she could do nothing with her. She was much disheartened at the poor results of her work among the Cove folk generally. She was afraid there was not much good to be done to them; they were a coarse, ignorant set, and they did not want to be made better; and even such a girl as Mary Peard, apparently able to take to better things—and then so pretty! added the good lady, innocently—even she was not to be reclaimed; and so the endeavour must be given up. And they bemoaned in company the immorality and evil disposition of the poor generally, as fine folk do who cannot separate conventional roughness of manners from moral vice; and wondered when the day would come that should see them civilised and reformed. And then they dined and drank their wine, and Squire Trescat's heavy face grew flushed and his eyes decidedly lack-lustre, not to say fishy.

But not to show a petty spite unbecoming a gentleman, the Squire rode down to the Cove again next day to scold Mary Peard for her disobedience, and try to bring her to reason; or, failing, to tell old Ann that she was cut off for ever from the good graces of Glentrescat and all the odd jobs and chores which had hitherto come to her share, turn and turn about with the rest. It would not do, he thought, to have this insubordination among a set of people he regarded very much as his vassals; for he was Lord of the Manor of Trescat Church Town, as well as holding those seaboard rights as far as his property extended; and he was a man who liked to make his authority felt among his inferiors, though personally he was free and open-handed too.

It was a beautiful day so far as artistic beauty of sea and sky went, but the dark, broad line of troubled slate on the horizon spoke volumes to the fishermen. Close in shore the sea was as blue as heaven and as smooth as a millpond; but they well knew how deceitful all this sweetness was—"as deceitful as old Dan Martin's smile," said Mary, with an unwonted burst of fancy. To-day also, as yesterday as for many days now—the Cove men were all ashore. There was no fishing to be had in this glaring noonday sun, and pilchards were not to be seen anywhere. They were not expected just yet, though a sharp look-out was being kept for them, and the "huer" was on the beacon-hill to watch. So the men knocked about the Cove, and

mended nets, and hammered at old boats, or daubed pitch and paint where necessary, and did what they could to pass the time they could not utilise in the ordinary way.

Thus they were all about when the Squire rode down again to "blow up the little jade" who had failed in her duty so outrageously last evening in not obeying the lady's command. And thus it was that he met Jose Carne face to face, when he hitched his horse's bridle up to the cramp in Ann Peard's cottage wall, and went in beneath the low-hung door.

Service on board a man-of-war had taught Jose manners. Instinctively he rose from his chair as the Squire came in; but the expression on his face was not quite so respectful as his attitude; and Mary, who knew the most of the three, trembled at the look in his eyes and the Squire's, and dreaded the outbreak she saw was so sure to come.

"Well, Jose, so you've got home again, I see," said Mr. Trescat, in that high-handed way of his—that oppressive familiarity of the superior which hurts a spirited man of lower degree almost as much as a blow.

"Yes, Sir; I'm at home again, as you say," said Jose, shortly. "I think it's time, from all I hear," significantly.

"Yes? Why? Father and mother doing well, I fancy? Who wants you?" said the Squire, flicking his whip against his boot.

"Some one does, Mr. Trescat: Mary, here, for one."

"Mary! Whew! Does the land lie there? Why, I thought Mary and George were making up together."

This the Squire said from malice. He thought nothing of the kind, but it suited him to attempt to disturb the even tenour and ruffle the smooth current. Next to getting what one wants oneself is the pleasure (to some) of spoiling the getting of other people.

"Well, Sir; we all know that's a lie, whoever says it!" flamed out Jose. "Mary never favoured George nor no one else—nor no one else, Mr. Trescat!" with emphasis.

"I know nothing about what such people as you call encouragement," said the Squire, with intense disdain. "Your ways are so unlike ours, who can tell what they mean?"

"And it's well they are unlike some of yours, Sir," said Jose, angrily. "It's well that we poor men are not like you gentlefolks, and that we know what's low better nor some of you, and keep clearer of it."

"Do you dare to speak to me like this, you scoundrel?" cried Mr. Trescat, striding forward.

"Ay, and to a dozen such as you who makes bold to say a word against my girl," said Jose, in a low, ominous tone. "You are not the man to speak of her—you tried it on and found it didn't fit, or I'm a liar!"

"Don't, dear Jose, don't!" said Mary, laying her hand on his shoulder. "You said you'd be peaceable; you said it, Jose!"

"Oh! that's the game, is it?" sneered the Squire. "You've been taken in quick enough after your coming home, my fine fellow, that's all I can say. But I should not have thought you quite so green as to believe a trumped-up story without some kind of proof. I suppose, though, you think you can get money out of me to hush it up? Hey, Mary? You were never more mistaken in your lives, my good people. Not a farthing, on my word of honour!"

"This for your word of honour!" shouted Jose, as he sprang on the Squire, catching him unprepared, and kicking him bodily out of the hut.

And there, in the face of day, with the fishermen all hanging about, and the women and children, attracted by the fact of the great man's presence, clustered round agape, was the Squire of the place spun out of a thatched cottage by a stalwart sailor, in a blaze of jealousy about a barefooted fisher-girl with tangled hair and a gipsy face. They all saw him flung out like a bale of goods, and a bad bale too; while Jose, triumphant and furious, stood by the cottage door and rolled his shirt-sleeves above his elbows.

There was no help for it; the disgrace was complete; and the Squire had nothing for it but to pick himself up and ride up the hill again, swearing to be revenged on Jose, and make him remember this day's work to the last hour of his life.

The deceitful sea had thrown off its mask, and by night-fall, as the tide came up, there came up with it a storm—one of those fierce and sudden storms which sweep round the Cornish coast with all the force of the Atlantic wave storms, which seem as if they must shake the very earth itself and bring to nothingness the strongest ramparts of nature. Presently they heard a distress gun in the distance, and they saw, between the rifts of driving foam and spray, blue lights and rockets thrown up from a vessel that was tossing, disabled and rudderless, in the oiling, rushing with devilish force before the wind and tide right on to the rocks. Nearer and nearer she came, so near that they saw her spars and hull, as if she was coming into their midst. The life-boat was manned; but as they ran her down the gangway the ship struck on the Lion's Den, the huge pile which comes out like a sentinel guarding the entrance to the Cove. They heard the grinding of her keel and the splitting of her timbers, mingled with the cries and shrieks of the ship-wrecked men. Again and again she was taken up by the waves and dashed upon the rocks; and by the time the boat put out she was a total wreck, having parted amidships, with all her life and treasure cast to the waves.

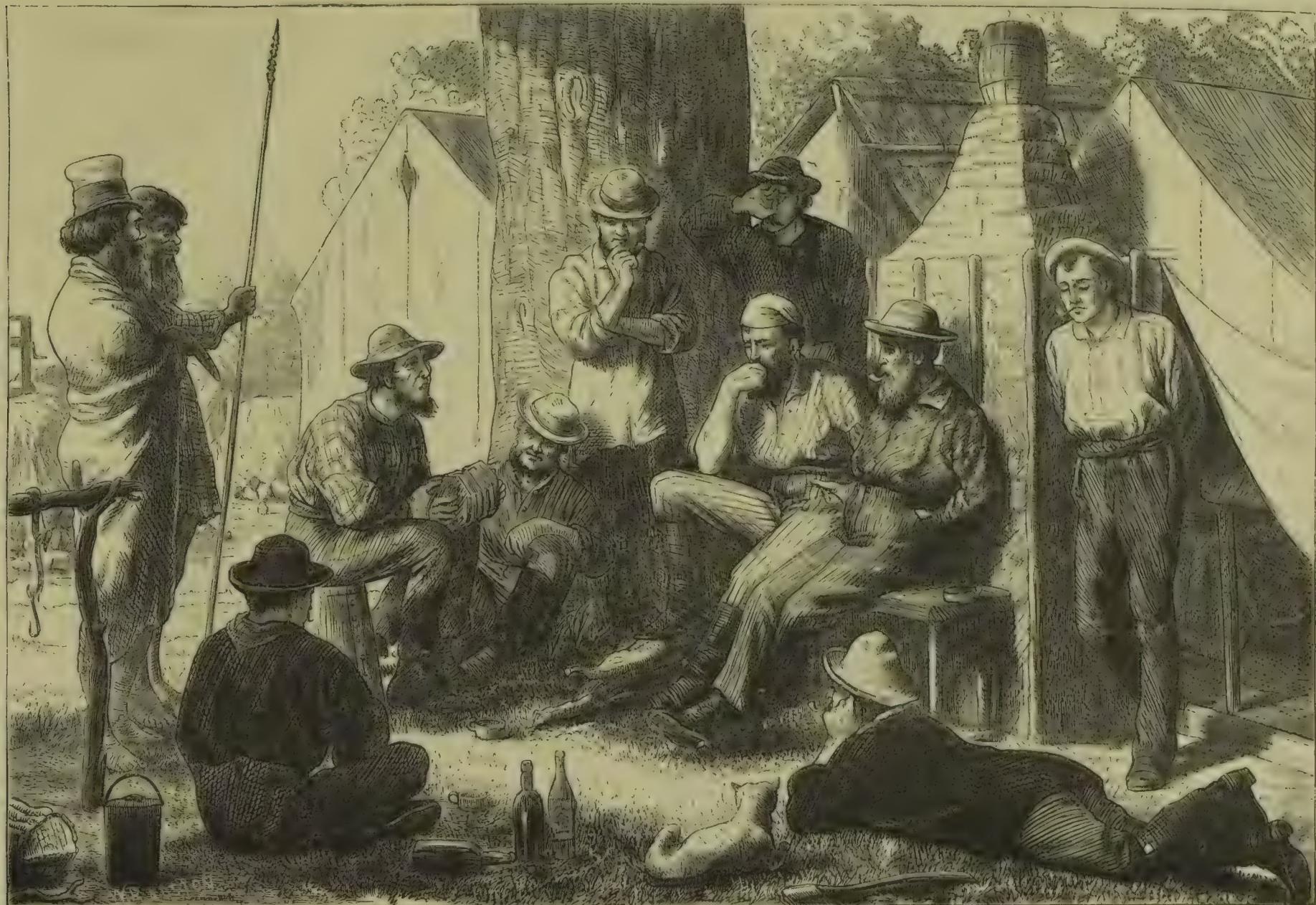
The night was too dark, the sea too high; not a man was saved among them all; but the tide washed up some bruised and mangled corpses; and when the morning broke the Cove was strewn from end to end with wreck.

This, then, was the first fruits of Squire Trescat's leased rights, and presently his bailiff appeared to claim them.

The men were busying themselves in saving what they could. They felt aggrieved if it should turn out that it was for the Squire, not for themselves, that they were working; for the salvage they would have would be but little compared with the worth of the wreck saved; and more than one swore loudly at the hardship of toiling comparatively in vain, and of giving his strength that another might profit.



LOWTHER ARCADE AT CHRISTMAS TIME.—DRAWN BY C. J. STANILAND.



CHRISTMAS IN AUSTRALIA: "HOME, SWEET HOME!" — DRAWN BY W. RALSTON.



CHRISTMAS IN AUSTRALIA: PUDDING TIME.—DRAWN BY W. RALSTON.

But old Martin cheered them on with assurances that they should not suffer, and that they should keep what they saved.

For Mr. Trescat himself, he was not sorry to have an occasion whereby to wreak the vengeance seething in his heart against the fishermen generally, because of his feud with one; and, though not anxious to appear again among the men so soon after that ignominious exit of his from Ann Peard's cottage, and Jose still unpunished, yet self-interest, helped by his desire to make them smart if he could, stood in the place of pride; and he came down as a chief among his serfs, and swore and ordered to his heart's content.

Jose Carne had not lent a hand in bringing in the wreck. He had brought in two or three dead bodies, and they lay now, covered with a sheet, near the store-hut for the crab-pots. This was his job, he said; and a sad one too. But he did not want to take salvage of Squire Trescat, and left others to do that who had a mind; and the one who had most mind for the work was old Daniel Martin.

Ostentatiously, with an affected show of honesty, he would bring to land a bit of the poor ship's timbers—a stove-in barrel, a length of frayed untwisted rope, and pile them upon the beach where the Squire and his bailiff stood, taking notes. He worked with prodigious energy, apparently; but the money value of his bringing was not beyond a few pence, and, the more worthless it was, the greater the parade with which he laid it on the beach and directed Mr. Trescat's attention to it. He over-shot his mark; and succeeded in not only making the Squire angry, but in making him suspicious as well. If he had been less insulting in his smiling, covert way, he would have escaped any special watching; but, as it was, Mr. Trescat kept his eye upon him diligently, sure that he should find him tripping—if he had the chance. And he had the chance. Jammed up in one of the crevices of the rock old Martin found a case of jewels. It was a small case—just a set of diamonds—no more; but the old man knew something of the value of his find, and slipped the treasure into his pocket. And the Squire saw him do it.

When he came back to shore again, down went the lord of the manor, owning jetsam and flotsam, and laid his hand on his arm. "That find, Martin?" he said, sternly. "You had better give it up quietly, man; else, by the Lord, I'll expose you before all the Cove. Give me what you have in your pocket—quick!"

"Lord love you!" began Martin; but the Squire cut him short, angrily.

"Did you hear what I said, man? Give me that find. Here, Ralph!" to his bailiff.

"You are hasty, Squire," smiled old Martin, smoothly. "I put them here for you. Lord love you! what could a poor man do with such things as these?" And he laid the casket of diamonds in his hand.

"What, indeed? as you say, Martin," said Squire Trescat, with a dark look, pocketing the jewels and turning away.

And Dan Martin, still smiling, looked up at him as darkly, and muttered something it were best the Squire did not hear. Yet, if he had heard, perhaps that awful future might never have been.

This scene had passed unnoticed by any of the men, and Martin learnt hereafter the value of keeping one's annoyances to oneself, and not, as Jose had done, proclaiming them to all the world, either on the housetop or before the cottage door.

They had wrought hard all through the day, and they had saved a goodly pile of valuables; and now night came on, and as the tide came up again the gale increased and the storm seemed to come up with it. The Squire mounted his horse and rode away, leaving Ralph, his bailiff, in nominal guard of the wreck. Nominal only; for Ralph, one of the Cove men by birth, had more feeling for his comrades than for his master; and, though honest for his own part, was lax in the matter of duty to an employer, and winked at much he should have spied out. The men didn't care for Ralph, not they; and, though he had got the length of the Squire's foot, they had got the length of his, which made matters square so far.

When the Squire rode into the darkness up the glen, Old Dan, whispering something hurriedly to his son George, disappeared into the darkness too. The men were training off their work now; it was getting too dark to see, even with the help of the lanterns, and one by one they dropped away, some to the Swan, and others to their homes, where they caroused or grumbled, drank deep or took their suppers quietly, according to their mood and nature. If the village roll-call had been gone through, then three men would have been found missing—old Dan Martin, George his son, and Jose Carne.

On rode the Squire at a foot's pace up the dark and broken road; and up the steep track that breasted the cliff strode one whose feet went swiftly on their errand—more swiftly by that shorter way than the rider by his. The Squire rode on till he came to the top of the cliff, and then he turned his horse's head across the turf, and so homeward. He was not thinking much of anything; half sleepy, half lost in reverie, he went quietly along, almost as delicately as once went Agag.

Suddenly, down in the Cove, they heard the report of a gun, and a coastguardsman, keeping his look-out not far off, saw the flash and went towards it. He came just too late; but some one else standing by heard the noise of a falling body, the plunge of a startled horse, the groan of a dying man, as the lifeless form of Squire Trescat lay on the bloody turf.

Then a man stooped over him, and took something from him. "There go old scores," he muttered; "now we are quits."

Flinging away his gun, this same man plunged down the steep track by which he had come up, and disappeared behind a jutting rock.

The coastguardsmen turned out, and the men in the Cove rushed up to see what was amiss when they heard the signal. They were all there but Jose Carne: Dan Martin coming last, after the rest had got half way up the road. George was there too, looking wild and white; and when they found the murdered Squire he gave a shriek not so much like a man's as an hysterical woman's. His father scowled at him fiercely, but the men took no notice of his cry; they had other work

on hand than to note the tones of a startled scream. One of them picked up the gun, still warm from the shot.

"Lord above us!" he cried; "here's old Jim Carne's gun!"

The old man came forward at the sound of his name; "The mercy of God be on me," he cried, "it's mine sure enough. Where's Jose?"

"Ay, where's Jose?" echoed old Martin, savagely. "We're all here, all we Cove men; and where's Jose?"

"I saw him go up the face of the cliff," said George Martin, with his eyes on the ground. "When the Squire went away Jose went too."

"My God, and so he did!" said Ralph. Yet Ralph loved Jose well, and wished him no harm.

"And this here's old Jim's gun," said one of the men; and the inference was too evident for anyone to pretend to ignore it. The quarrel yesterday, the Squire's fancy for Mary Peard and Jose's engagement to her, now buzzed about through the Cove, old Carne's gun still warm, and Jose's disappearance. There was no doubt in the minds of any. Besides, did not young George Martin say he had seen him leave the Cove directly after the Squire? The case looked black enough; and when the coastguardsmen had turned it over and over, and the policeman from St. Mary's had come and turned it over too, there was but one belief among them all, and not a voice was raised to assert Jose Carne's innocence. It was pretty much the same in the Cove. Even his father half doubted and his mother trembled; but Mary Peard, lifting her hands to Heaven, cried passionately "It is not true! Whoever did it, Jose had no hand in it, and may God send the Death-ship for the sinner!"

The fishermen shrank back as she said this. The Death-ship of Trescat Cove was a fact to them as true as the sun; it came only for the vilest of sinners when they were dying, for those for whom God had no mercy, and hell a vacant place. But it was a curse they felt would settle on the Cove for ever, unless lifted off by fulfilment, and they talked of it in low and anxious tones, and wished she had not said it. Only Dan Martin scoffed at the whole thing; but then Dan believed in nothing, neither in God nor the devil.

CHAPTER IV.

But where was Jose all this time? He had been last seen standing, with Mary Peard, not far from where the poor dead bodies lay; and after that no one had taken much note of him. No one but George Martin seemed to have seen him again, or was able to say he had or had not been in the Cove. George was the only witness, truly; but, as the policeman said, "One is as good as a dozen, if the one's word goes for aught at all." And the whole thing fitted in too well to allow of much doubt. So, when Jose came back, the next day, saying he had been at Penzance overnight, it was of no avail for him to swear that he had set out before the Squire, or that he had been at Penzance at such and such an hour, and that he had witnesses to prove it. He might have run; he might have ridden; he might have taken short cuts across the fields; he might have done a hundred things which would have brought him to the town at time he said, if even he could substantiate that fact; and yet he might have lain in wait for the Squire on his way, and have put a bullet in his head at the top of the cliffs.

Besides, his going to Penzance at all on such a night, and after such a day's work, was suspicious in itself. He had gone for a license, had he? He, a poor man, must be married by license, forsooth! The reason was as bad a one as could be given, and it was made no better by the production of the license itself. It was too evidently a blind, they all said or thought; and Jose found his case weakened, not strengthened, by the truth.

It was all very well to try and clear himself, poor boy! said the men; but who else could have done it? Mr. Trescat had no feud with anyone else. He was not popular, maybe, and the men were angry about this wreckage matter; but, good lord! men don't shoot each other o' nights because they don't like a master's ways on public grounds! When it touches a boy's honour with his girl, that's another matter, if you please!

Again, all the men were to the fore when they mustered on the hill after they heard the shot; he, and he alone, was missing. And how could one of them have done it, when they all came out of their huts, old Martin among them? No one exactly remembered seeing old Martin come out of his own house-door; nor George, for the matter of that; but then George gave the first alarm, and he was there; and Martin was at their heels before they had got half way. To be sure, Mary Peard declared that Jose had taken leave of her and quitted the Cove an hour before sundown, and they all knew the Squire had stayed a good two hours longer. But George Martin's oath went further than Mary's assertion. All that she could say was, that Jose had taken leave of her, and that, to the best of her belief, he had gone right away to Penzance there and then. George said he had not; and, as Mary had kept indoors after that, she was not likely to know for certain when he had really left, or whether he had or had not stayed on, as George declared, and followed the Squire up the cliff. So, when the poor lad came back next day, he was arrested in full view of them all, and the net closed round him as if there would be never a slack string again.

At first he was too overwhelmed to say much. He only protested his innocence. "All men do when they are first took," said the policeman, sententiously. But when George Martin swore to his having followed the Squire up the cliff he turned round upon him fiercely and said, "George, thou art a liar, and thou knows it."

However, the magistrate before whom they all went plainly thought George Martin an honest man, for he complimented him on the frank and straightforward way in which he gave his evidence; and, though he liked the looks of Jose, and felt sorry for him in his heart, yet he could do nothing else, as things stood, but commit him to prison on the charge of wilful murder, to stand his trial at the next assizes.

It was a bright sunny day when the charge was taken—one of those warm, rich, late summer days which are so lovely in Cornwall, by the seaside; but many of the Cove men noticed, as they came home in a wondering group together, that George Martin was white and cold as if it had been winter with snow on the ground. He shivered more than once, and once inadvertently remarked how dark it was to-day; but the men looked at him strangely when he said that, and some jeered at him openly, and some spoke together in whispers and glanced at him askance. For the Cornish folk believe that when a man has committed perjury he never feels the sunlight again, never sees its brightness, but, stricken with worse than ordinary blindness, with more than physical coldness, sees nature only as he is himself—cold, pale, and dreary, whatever the glory of the sun or the blaze of the noon-tide warmth.

No one, however, said this, or reminded him of the general faith, until Mary Peard, meeting him face to face, cried out, as the blood left her own lips for horror, "He's got the liar's look on him, and he'll have the liar's doom."

All crowded round her as she said these words. They expressed, as we have seen, the unspoken thought of a good many among them, though others were as ready to swear to George Martin's truth and to think that things did look ugly in Jose. But George, instead of meeting her look fairly, as an honest man would, cowered and trembled visibly, putting up his hands before him as if to defend himself against her; then, lifting up his eyes pitifully to hers, he said, "Don't ye, Mary; don't ye! If you curse me, I shall die."

"Die!" echoed Mary, scornfully, flinging back her head with a contemptuous gesture, as she looked at him over her shoulder; "Men like you, George, and who have done as you have, don't die for a girl's word. If you could die of shame or sorrow, you'd do it now, with Jose in prison yonder and you standing a free man here. O Jose! Jose!" she burst out, with a wild wail, "that you should have been spared from all you've gone through to come home and be sworn to death by one of your own. But your sin will find you out, George Martin," she added, changing as quickly from despair to wrath as she had changed from scorn to despair; "assure as there's a God in Heaven you'll suffer for this day's work. You can't see the sun now, and worse'll come of it."

"Come! come! we've had enough of this," said old Daniel, coming forward with an air of authority, "George, what's over you, boy, that you stand as if you were mazed to hear the ill words of a half-crazed piece like this? Poor wench!" he added, with that kind of sympathy which is in itself an insult; "we must not be hard on her. It is a trial—none doubts it—that her man should be taken from her just as he had come home to make all comfortable; and on such a matter, too! A murderer's not like a fair fight, even; and Jose's neck'll get stretched for this business, if ever a man's will!"

"And I don't say whose ought," flashed out Mary, turning round and facing old Martin. Why did he lower his eyes, too, as George had done, and seem unable to meet those burning orbs of hers? "I'd be sorry to lay that on any man among ye; but I do say that George, there, knows he lied. And I say more: that not one of us here'll die before the true man's known, and Jose's name is cleared. Mind what I say, boys: the man among ye as did it will have to face it out; and I said it once, and I'll say it again." Here she raised her hands, while her voice rose to a wild scream. "May the curse of God light on the murderer and the Cove, till the truth is known, and the Death-ship comes for him!"

"The child is off her head!" said Martin, quietly; but he wiped the cold drops from his upper lip as he spoke, while George shook from head to foot as if he had the ague. The rest of the men all drifted away, most of them looking scared as they talked in hushed voices among each other, glancing back at the girl whom they left standing alone on the shore sand—no longer the Mary Peard they had loved like their own, but the wretch to whom they owed the worst misfortune that had ever befallen their village—with worse to come.

But when they had all left her she sank down from her state of hysterical exaltation, and only a ragged, bareheaded fisher girl, weeping bitterly behind the apron she had flung over her face, remained of the young sibyl who had called that curse upon her people, which had chilled the stoutest heart among them to hear.

Poor Mary! her lot was a bad one at this present time. All had come out she had tried to hide, for it never does a girl of the people good among her own class to have it known that she has attracted a gentleman, however innocent so far as she herself is concerned; and she was clever enough to know that, though she had not quite so much knowledge of the world as a London lady. The fact alone that Jose and the Squire had had a fight about her, even without this dreadful charge as the outcome of it, would have made her to be ill-looked on by the Cove men; but now she seemed a double calamity, having brought on them the terrible disgrace with which they were threatened by the law, and that other still more terrible doom, if more shadowy, which would never be lifted off until the Death-ship came for the evildoer.

Beside this shame resting on her, she had lost all now but her own poor sea-work. The Squire's lady, of course, could not be spoken to and would not help her if she had been asked; Jose was in prison, worse than dead for the time; and though George Martin would willingly have coined his blood for gold and given it to her, she would accept no kind of help from him or his. Pilchard-fishing, too, was bad, and their share, hers and her mother's, in the seine boats brought nothing. She wrought early and late, now shrimping, now as a trigger, gathering whelks and mussels; she hawked fish about the country, carrying it in a cowl slung to her back; she worked at rude fieldwork for anyone who would employ her; nothing came amiss to her; and if anything could have softened the superstitious feeling of her evil influence among them, which made the Cove men shrink from her as one "wisht," it would have been her brave endurance, her heroic industry.

Meanwhile she and her mother were nigh starving. Their fire was never alight now; her clothes, rent, stained, disordered, hung loosely over her shrunken figure; her aspect became daily poorer and more neglected; and the savage destitution in which she lived was eating into her very womanhood, and destroying all her grace, all her sweetness, all her beauty. But she still said George Martin nay, and still held to her faith in Jose and to the ultimate proving of his innocence. And when she used to say this with all her wild blood on fire, George knew that by Jose's innocence she meant his guilt.

Yet nothing that she could do or say would hold George Martin off. Day by day he came to her cottage, no matter with what scorn she received him; no matter, either, how badly he sped on any errand he had undertaken. The men said he was bewitched, and they jeered him covertly. For there was something about him they did not like to touch too openly; and, in truth, he himself sometimes thought he was. If the most patient devotion, the most unwearied perseverance in an unwelcome love could have bought a girl's pity, he would have bought hers. But she had no pity for him; never a word of thanks, whatever he did or tried to do; only abhorrence and denial. She would take nothing at his hands. If he came to give her a length of net to make, she, who caught eagerly at any work, no matter what, flung back this, to which she had been used from her childhood and which was good pay for comparatively easy labour. Though she hawked fish about the country, grateful to take it from anyone who would trust her, when it was not hers by right of her share, she would have none of the Martins' catch; and when he left bread or what not surreptitiously in her cottage, she seemed to have a kind of instinct as to where it came from, and, biding her time, would throw his gifts on to the road before him as he passed. A savage, untamable ferocity seemed to have taken possession of her so far as he was concerned, and the more he sought her good will, the more she scorned and forbade him.

Once, when he had tried to do her a kindness, which she had savagely rejected, and he had turned to her with a wild, despairing pleading for gentler usage, she answered him, levelling her eyes at him—those eyes he could never meet now—and speaking more solemnly and less fiercely than was her wont, "When Jose Carne comes down to the Cove a free man, George, I'll eat at your hand, and give you my own upon it. You could bring him down with a word; and you leave him in gaol for want of it. While he's there and you here never ask me to take the value of a crust from you, or give you a friend's word."

Another day, when he brought her a string of pilchards, and asked her with tears to take them from him, she flung back his hand with a fierce disdain, though she had not tasted food for twenty-four hours, and said, with the old flash in her eyes, "I take a gift from the hand of a man who cannot feel the sun? No; I'd die of hunger first!"

And George knew that she would, and shivered as he slunk away in the broad sunlight, of which he neither felt nor saw a ray.

"If only I could feel that sun again!" he said to himself. "If only I could see it shine as I used!"

Vain wish! That would never return to him again. By his own act he had put out the light of Heaven, and nothing now would restore what he himself had destroyed. Can we ever recover the light of Heaven we ourselves put out by sin?

CHAPTER V.

Nothing went well with Martin, and never, within the memory of the oldest fisherman in the Cove, was such a series of misfortunes known to have overtaken any one. Persistent ill-luck followed him in all he did, on land or on sea, in house and in boat. When every man about him hauled in fish as fast as the line could be pulled up, he and young George had nothing to show but naked hooks and lost bait, or at the best a worthless dogfish or a half-starved pollack; his best boat got jammed among the rocks, and was broken up into splinters before they could get her off; his cottage caught fire and was half burned down before it could be put out; and his potatoes were a failure, though every other man's crop showed flowers and fruit, and were as sound as they were fine; the bank in which he had placed a hundred pounds of his savings broke, and paid a dividend so small that it was practically worthless as a set-off; and, though certainly he had something hidden beneath his bed which would have redeemed all his failures ten times over, yet he had become cowardly of late, and dared not utilise what he had done so much to obtain—what he had lost his soul to gain!

George, too, had lost his health and strength, strangely and suddenly. No one knew what ailed him, and to call it "a waste" did not help even the fisherfolk to understand it much. If they thought anything among themselves they kept it quiet; but they were not so fond of going about with him as they had been—he was so irritable, so moody, so unlike himself; and one by one they fell from him, as men do from one whom they think accursed and suspect of crime.

Yet for all his illness and ill-luck, and Mary's unwavering disdain, George held on to his one hope, his one object. Jose out of the way, he thought still that he should eventually win her over. Had she not all but suffered him on that fatal day of Jose's return? and could he not get back the ground lost since then because of that return? Jose would be hanged, there was no doubt of that; his evidence would be too strong against him; his evidence—and he looked up at the sky, and thought he had sold himself too dearly if his hope should turn out to be but a delusion in the end. And yet what could Mary do when Jose was put out of the way for ever? Fret, may be, and take it to heart for many a long day; but the longest day has an end, and in the end who but himself would she have to fall back on? If only she would not look at him so strangely! if only he could keep from shivering before her, and be able to say that he knew when the sun was shining!

Restless and miserable, father and son were for ever at

hard work, that seemed, however, something like the water-carrying of the Danaides or the rolling of the Sisyphean stone—it never came to good, whatever they did. They were out in all weathers, yet they not only came back empty-handed, but generally with some damage done. Now they lost a spar and now an oar; on one day they split a sail, on another they split the rudder; or they lost their nets, or stove in the side of the boat. Nothing was too great ill-luck for them, and fortune seemed to take a woman's delight in persecuting them. Still they went out on the sea in all weathers; anything seemed better than remaining on land.

One day they put out in spite of the omens which sea and sky both showed. All last night the fishermen said the dead had been "hailing their own names," calling out from the deep where they lay; and the fog bank across the mouth of the little harbour was a sign to those bolder spirits who did not believe in dead men's voices that they were best ashore to-day, and until matters looked clearer. Not a sane man of all the Cove would have ventured out with such a sea and sky; but the Martins, impelled by that restless misery which had possessed them of late, loosed their boat and pushed off, careless of all the warnings nature or the dead might give. So they rowed out in the dead calm of the bay and into the bank of fog, and beyond.

Hours passed, and they did not return. Meanwhile, the gale, which had come up from the open sea, and which freshened with the tide, blew the fog bank into space, and thundered into the Cove. It was a wild, strong, iron breeze, blowing right in shore, and bringing up a sea that even bold men would not care to face. Many were the anxious looks cast out, and many the glasses that swept the horizon, for signs of the absent boat; but they could see nothing of her. If she had gone down like a stone in the midst of the ocean she could not have more completely vanished out of sight; and yet the wind set in shore, and she must have had a stiff time of it tacking, though she sailed well when she sailed close.

At last, just at sunset, they spied her far away, sailing, as it seemed to them, a little wildly; but, as the wind served her well, all she had to do was to keep her head straight and come on. But though she came on well enough, she came like a boat that is not steered, but is just dependent on the winds for her course. And look as long as they might, they could see no man in her; and her course was perilously like making for Death's Head rock, which stood about five miles away. Then the night closed in, and they saw no more. And with the night came a dead, dull calm. The wind fell as suddenly as it had risen; but they knew the boat had her oars on board, and they expected she would row in, if she did not stand off for the night.

When the morning came it brought no change of weather. Still that dead, dull calm, with the storm brewing in the distance. As the men gathered on the cliffs, and mounted the rocks on the sands, they looked out again for the boat, and a cry went round as they saw her drifting with the current close on Death's Head rock. All attempts at steering her were clearly abandoned; her sails, which were still set, flapped idly against the mast; she floated with the tide and the current, like a dead thing; and then they saw her strike on the rocks, and strike and strike again; not with any force, but in a quiet, unresisting way, as if she had been a bit of drift-wood; just lifted up by the incoming wave, and tossed gently upon the old granite blocks, on which, had she been flung with any force, she would have broken up into firewood before many minutes were out. Then they manned a boat, and went out to her relief.

The men pulled hard and well, and in due time neared her. They shouted when they came within hail, but no one answered. Had it been that dreaded death-ship itself it could not have been more silent. But the sun caught a strange red patch on the boat's side, and one of the men said, below his breath, "That's blood, mates!" but the others kept silence. They liked the words badly enough, and the look of things worse; but they pulled with a will, and soon got alongside the drifting boat; and boarded her.

In the bottom lay young George, dead. He had evidently been dead for many hours, for he was quite stiff and cold; but the men did not at first make out exactly how he had died, till they saw a dark blue mark on his throat, which looked as if it had been made by a hand, and that his eyes were starting and his mouth covered with a bloody froth. He had been strangled, sure enough; but by whom? At his feet lay old Martin, bleeding and insensible. He had been stabbed twice, and a knife, crusted with blood from blade to haft, was found close to where young George lay. The old man, however, was alive, if unconscious; and by degrees the friendly cares of his mates revived him, and he opened his eyes once more to the day. When questioned as to what had happened, he only shook his head and would give no answer; but he said that he wanted a doctor to be fetched as soon as he got home, and that then, may be, he would have something to tell. Farther than this he would say nothing; so they wrapped him up in a sail, and set out on their terrible return home. Less terrible, truly, than had such a tragedy happened to any other man of the community; but even to the Martins it was an awful matter, and seemed to shed a gloom and to react in shame upon them all.

When they reached home, the doctor was sent for from St. Mary's; and he told the old man, what he knew by this time himself, that he was dying and there was no hope for him. He would give him twelve hours, he said, but only twelve; so, what he had to prepare, all he had to say, must be said and done now, if he would not leave it undone for ever.

"Send for Captain James," said Martin, in a low voice. "I must talk to him."

Captain James was the nearest magistrate; he who had committed poor Jose to prison; and when it was known that he had been sent for, the whole Cove was in a state of excitement, like a hive of bees about to swarm, clustering round about Dan Martin's place, as if the very garden railings could tell them all they burned to know. And when

Captain James came, Martin made his confession fairly out from end to end. He told him all: how that he had had a lifelong, if unexpressed, feud with Squire Trescat, because of that early smuggling matter, which had rankled; and how he had vowed to be one day even with him; and how he had kept his vow on the night of the wreck, taking old Carne's gun with him that suspicion might fall on Jose—so easy to be suspected because of the quarrel in the morning—who would thus be out of his son's way. For he knew how young George had followed Mary Pearn, and how things had, at last, seemed to be going well for him, till Jose came back and spoilt all. If he was out of the way, then, he thought—as George, too, had thought—George would have his will; so he wreaked his vengeance on Squire Trescat and helped his son, by putting a rival out of his way, at the same time. And he justified himself, if things had gone as they should. But, now that he was about to die, he might as well tell the truth as let Jose suffer, George being gone too. He was willing to leave behind him the shame of one confessed murder rather than go down to the grave carrying the guilt of two kept secret. As for the thing they saw in his boat, he could tell them but little more than what they had seen and guessed for themselves. It came quite suddenly. George's face changed so that his own mother would not have known him. He had seen nothing like it except in pictures and on the rocks of an evening, when the shadows were long. He supposed he lost his mind all of a sudden; for, without an ill word between them, George fastened on him with the knife, and said he was the devil, and must be killed. He had to choke him off to save himself; but he did not know that he had killed him; indeed, he knew no more after he had seen his own blood till they found him as they had; and he didn't count killing George—though he grieved to hear it, and yet it was, perhaps, all for the best—a murder like the Squire's.

The confession was made quietly, but with many pauses, much pain; and then the old man shut his eyes and lay back, as if dying; but the doctor said he would last till well into the night, and the magistrate ordered the policeman to watch him.

He rallied for a short time after this, and himself sent for Mary Pearn to come and sit by him; and the only sign of emotion he showed through it all was when his dying eyes rested on her famine-wasted face, so sorrowful, so stricken as it was.

"Can you forgive me, Mary?" he asked, and tears softened his eyes and choked his voice.

"Now that you've righted Jose, yes, Dan, I forgive you," she answered, trembling.

"But you've cursed me, Mary; you've called the Death-ship on me. Can't you lift the curse off me, and let me die as a man should?"

"I can't unsay what I've said, Dan," was her answer, very quietly and very pitifully made; "but I'll pray for you now that my words may pass."

She knelt down by the bed and began a poor little tearful prayer, but Dan Martin stopped her,

"Too late, too late, now," he said feebly. "It's done, girl, and as the tree falls, so it must lie. Good-night, Mary, I can't see you now; poor George! and he couldn't see the sun! and I daren't say God bless you. I would if I dared."

All this was said in a low, dreamy voice, as if he did not know what he was saying; and then he closed his eyes again, and it was hard to say whether he was yet living or had died while Mary and the policeman sat by the bed and watched him lying there in silence. But before the night was through Mary was sent for to go to her own poor hut, where her mother was lying in a kind of fit. Dan Martin moaned when she rose to go, and moved his hands as if seeking for something, but he did not open his eyes, and he did not say anything intelligible; he only moaned and moved restlessly, as if he was troubled at some loss. But it was well for her that she had to go, and so was spared what came after.

Just before the day began to break the men on the lookout saw a black, square-rigged ship come gliding suddenly on shore. She came as if from the clouds, and was on them before they knew she was there. No man was aboard of her, no steersman at her helm, no watch on her deck, no light at her bows; with all sails set, she came against wind and tide, the sea showing no line in her wake, and no foam flung off at her prow, gliding close in shore and skirting the rocks as if she had known her way like a living being. Suddenly they heard a strange voice say, as if from the clouds, "The hour has come, but where is the man?" Then another voice thundered back from the ship and called "Daniel Martin" by name. The policeman said that the old man started up in bed as he heard the summons, and the pale face, from being tranquil as the face of one passing away, became such as would haunt him to his last day, he said, with a shudder. He stretched out his hands and cried out for mercy—for mercy of nothing seen, only of something felt, a vague and terrible Presence, as if the room was full of some dark, nameless horror, whose very vagueness made it more terrifying. Then the voice called "Daniel Martin" again, and once again, and at the third time, with a shriek that startled the whole Cove, the old man died, and the square-rigged, black-hulled ship glided out as she had come in, and was lost in an instant from the sight. It was the Death-ship Mary had invoked, and by its fulfilment the curse was lifted from the Cove.

The rest may soon be told. Jose Carne's innocence was established as clear as noonday, and he was released none the worse in repute, if dashed in spirits for a time, by his imprisonment. Innocence however, is a wonderful help to a man; and if he was sadder than when he came singing down the path with Mary on his arm, not so long ago, he was not one to let his life be rendered useless even for such a fire as he had passed through. Some gentlemen took up his case and got him a good appointment in the coastguard service. So he married Mary out of hand, and they left Trescat Cove for their station in Wales; which, perhaps, was the best thing for them.



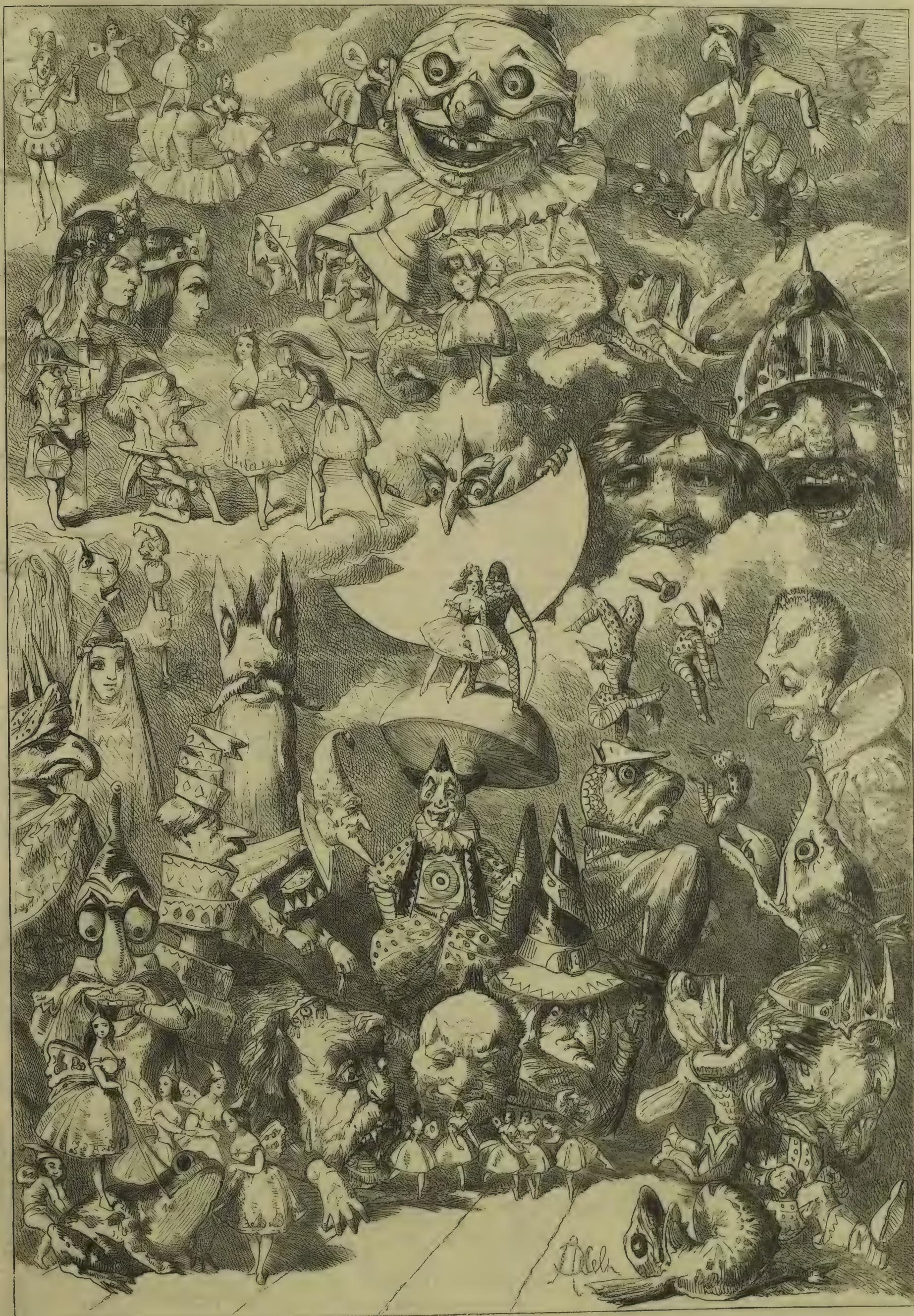
"So I see you and George have been making it up," said the Squire."

"THE DEATH-SHIP OF TRECATE COVE."



"And there, in the face of day, was the Squire flung out of the cottage like a bale of goods."

"THE DEATH-SHIP OF TRECATE COVE."



GATHERING FOR THE PANTOMIME; A DREAM OF CHANCIFANCIA.—DRAWN BY ALFRED CROWQUILL.



HE MILLER AND
HIS MAN,
A Drawing-room Extrava-
ganza for Christmas.
BY F. C. BURNAND.
WITH MUSIC BY
ARTHUR S. SULLIVAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.
JOE GRYNDON. The Joe Miller.
MARQUIS DE MINCEPIE. A
wicked old Marquis.
CYMON. The Miller's Man.
JANETTA. His Daughter.
DUMPY THE DWARF.
ROBERT AWUNNER. A Con-
stable.

SCENE I.—The Miller's Cottage.
Exterior.

Music. CYMON is discovered
playing on the fiddle.

Cymon (sings, sentimentally).
Janetta, awake! your lover hear.
Janetta awake, Janetta dear!
(To himself, gaily.)
I'm rather afraid
That a serenade
Will wake the old Miller who lives within.
But why shouldn't I
A serenade try,
When I've learnt to play,
And I had to pay
For learning to play on the violin.

(Resumes the sentimental style.)

Janetta, awake! your lover hear,
Janetta, awake! Janetta dear!

[Symphony on Violin. During Symphony JANETTA enters from house, locks door on outside, and comes to CYMON.]

Janetta (they embrace rapturously).

Where is my father?

Cymon. Your respected pater

Is still asleep. You know he rises later.

And while I, here, am playing like an Orpheus,
Gryndon the Miller's in the arms of Morpheus.
And who is Morpheus?

Cymon. He's the god of sleepers.
He edits all the latest ev'nning peepers.
Papa does not suspect we love each other.
He thinks that I'm a fool and (hesitating) you're another.

Janetta. Why should we not elope?

Cymon. We have no cash.
Just now the man who steals my purse steals trash.
Your father owes me wages for the mill.
He owed 'em me last year, and owes 'em still.
He says the blight has made him money lose.
I feel the blight, but can't get my mill dues.
Still, if you marry—

Janetta. We can't live, that's flat,
On nothing.

Cymon. No; there's something, tho', in that.
But if I only was a little wiser—

Janetta. And if my father wasn't such a miser—

Cymon (enthusiastically). We might—

Janetta (enthusiastically). We might—

Gryndon (without, loudly). Janetta!

Janetta. 'Tis my pappy!

Cymon. Farewell!
[Music. They are about to embrace, when a loud knocking is heard: and kissing his hand to JANETTA, exit hurriedly.]

Janetta. He knocks; there's something on the tappety.
[She unlocks the door, and enter from house GRYNDON the Miller. Music. JANETTA curtseys to him.]

Gryndon (recitative). Me—(chord)—I think you would deceive. (Chord)
And now—(chord)—I've finished—(chord)—my reci—(chord)—tative. (Finale two chords.)

[CYMON appears at back carrying a sack, which he deposits by the window.]

Cymon. Pay me my wages, Master, as you ought.

Gryndon. Haven't I?

Cymon (emphasis and ungrammatically). No, not nothing of the sort.
You owe me two years' wages come last Goose day.
I know it, 'cos it fell upon a Two'day.

Janetta. Why don't you pay him, Pa?
Gryndon (angrily). What's that to you?
Janetta. Don't get your steam up, though you are a screw.
Gryndon (angrily). Screw! (Pathetically). This is cruel, from my only child,
Who in her cradle often on me smiled.
Whose lovely face—the image of her father—
Shining from lots of yellow soap and water—
Reminds me that I've something got to say
In private. Listen! (CYMON listens too, and GRYNDON turns round on him.) Cymon, go away.
Stop! take my crossbow, go and shoot some game;
I've a guest coming—never mind his name.
I will provide your dinner, or a part;
For sweets the Magpie or the Talking Tart.
For fish, the sole bird is—'tis not a story—
The Jack Daw—he's first cousin to John Dory.
If in mechanics you'd d' at dinner deal.
You'd have a poulet and a little meal.

[GRYNDON kicks him off, and then returns to JANETTA.]

Janetta. Well, now, the conversation for renewin'—
Where were we?
Gryndon (grinny). Ah! where are we, girl? In ruin.
Yes, ruin stares us in the face. Despair!
It's very rude of ruin, then, to stare.
It's bearish; and, to add a "b" to ruin,
This conduct's that of an untutor'd Bruin.
Gryndon. Don't talk of brewin', when my much-loved daughter,
Henceforth we'll only get to drink cold water.
Yes; o'er the workhouse it is written clear,
"Alsop's abandon ye who enter here."
I cannot pay your dressmaker or milliner,
Though I am willin', no papa is williner.
Therefore, if you would have your dress and carriage,
You must at once contract a noble marriage.
That's the broad plan on which, my dear, I've acted—

Janetta (sarcastically). That's the broad plan of what's to be contracted.
Whose wife do you propose that I shall be?
Servant (entering and announcing). The Marky de Mincepie.

Janetta, Gryndon. Mincepie! 'Tis he!
Enter the MARQUIS DE MINCEPIE.

SONG OF THE MARQUIS DE MINCEPIE.

Allegretto.

MARQUIS. The Marquis de Mince-pie am I, From the land of cold plum pudding, Where the weather's cold and dry, And we've lots of coats and hooding,

PIANO-FORTE.

Where drinks are hot and strong, In ancient sil-ver flagons, And we dine to the sound of the gong, And our pets are young snap-dragons, snap-dragons, snap-dra-gons.

And so, if you put the question, and in-quire who am I? From the State of In-di-ges-tion Comes the Marquis de Mince-pie. And so, if we put the question, He will tell us,

standing by, From the State of In-di-ges-tion Comes the Marquis de Mince-pie, The Marquis de Mince-pie, The Marquis de Mince-pie, The Marquis de Mince-pie.

Marquis. Ma'mselle, this is indeed a treat to be with you.
I do sincerely hope I shall agree with you.
These diamonds with you shall now be placed.
[Presents casket of diamonds.]

Janetta. The brilliants of a Mincepie must be paste.
Marquis. Nay, fair one, don't be crusty.
Gryndon. Pray excuse
Her country manners. (Aside.) Child, if you refuse,
Our only chance is gone of getting wealth.
(Aloud to MARQUIS.)

I'm glad to see your Lordship in such health.

Marquis. Thank ye. Let's come to business. I propose
For her.

Janetta. I don't accept; quite autre chose.

Gryndon (in despair). She doesn't know what she is saying.

Janetta. If you allude to me you're wrong. I do.
I will not take Mincepie (GRYNDON threatens), in
spite of force.

He's not "the cheese"—there's yet another course.

Marquis. You love another?

Janetta. I'm a maiden coy
Who hates Mince-pie, but loves a Mins-trel boy.
Gryndon. Whom do you mean?

Janetta. (Indignantly) Tis not for me to say.

Take back the—
(Handing back casket, but thinks better of it)
No, I'll keep them. Sir, good-day!

[About to exit.]
Gryndon (stopping her). Stay! She is joking.

Marquis. Is she (*looking at watch*)? Then at two
To-morrow you will pay whatever's due
To me, your landlord, or you'll make her mine,
And at that hour she'll the contract sign;
If not you'll be transformed.

Both. Transformed!
Marquis. No cheat!
For I shall turn you both into the street;
Your slight of hand will be repaid by that,
(Pleasantly)
And now we know exactly what we're at.

Janetta. You do not mean it?
Marquis. Yes I do!
Marry me, or pay me every stiver.
Gryndon. Had I foreseen it
(To JANETTA) Or had you,
We might have saved a solitary fiver.

Gryndon ENSEMBLE.
A solitary,
Solitary,
Solitary, solitary fiver;
But { he has } not,
A sixpence got,
Nor a solitary, solitary fiver.
If I'd a penny,
But I've not any,
I'd give you that, you know it.
You've no assets.
To pay your debts,
Your rent—to me you owe it.

Janetta. Owe! Owe! Owe! Owe!
Not a penny! Not a penny! No, no, no!
And sad to tell,
I've nothing got to sell,
How I wish I kept a shop.

Marquis and Gryndon. What sort of a shop?
Janetta. A baker's shop.
Where behind the counter I'd stop, stop, stop.

Marquis. And what would you sell?
Janetta. I don't think I'll tell.

Gryndon. But what could you sell to pay my duns?

Janetta. Why—

One a penny, two a penny.
Three a penny.
Four a penny.
Five a penny, six a penny,
Hot cross-buns!

TRIO.

One a penny, two a penny,
Three a penny, four a penny,
Five a penny, six a penny,
Hot cross-buns!

[*Exeunt dancing to the symphony.*] JANETTA into the house, MARQUIS on the opposite side.

Gryndon (alone). She loves another, and contemns this match.
I'll watch the girl—the lovers I will catch.
But how? Of hiding-places there's a lack.
Ha! ha! The very thing—within this sack.

[*Music.* He tries to get in.]
It's not so easy (*looks off*, and calls)

Marquis! Here! Hi! hi!

Re-enter MARQUIS.

Mincepie! I'll be myself your Lordship's spy.
Assist me. Thank you.

Marquis. [Gets in with Marquis's assistance.] What d'ye mean to do?
Gryndon. See who's the lover she prefers to you.

Good-by. [*Disappears into sack.*]

Marquis. I'd better tie it at the top. [*Fastens sack.*]

Enter CYMON, with crossbow.
Ha! Here's a sportsman. P'raps he's come to pop.

What are you looking for?
A little duck.

Cymon. Tis he! Tis she!
Marquis (aside). I never had such luck.

There's not a single bird that I can hit.
Now I've come here while following a tom-tit.
I thought he'd be a tom-tit bit for dinner.
I am so hungry that I'm getting thinner.

Enter JANETTA.

Cymon! Just see me shoot there, on that stack.
Now by the window—now (*the MARQUIS getting out of the way*).

(He fires and the sack staggers.)

Marquis. He's killed the sack.

Music. The sack jumps about with fearful contortions. At last GRYNDON breaks through it, and is about to strike CYMON, who kneels to him, when he is restrained by JANETTA. MARQUIS, who has taken CYMON'S crossbow when he threw it away on being pursued by the sack points it at him. Tableau. Scene closes.

SCENE II.—In the country. Somewhereshire.

Enter CYMON.

Alas! I am turned out. The miller said
That, as I'd shot him, I should not be paid.
He wouldn't stand the shot—he'd got a lot of it.
'T was a long shot, and that's the long and short of it.
If I can bring him twenty thousand crowns—
He might as well name twenty thousand towns—
By two to-morrow, then he'll let Janetta.
Become my bride; if not, he will not let her.
But he will force her, though she'll kick and cry,
To marry that gay Marquis de Mincepie.
Well, here I am at large, but not at ease,
And now—I'll eat a slice of bread-and-cheese.

Music. Enter DUMPY THE DWARF.
Cymon. I'm very hungry Mr. Whatsyourname.
You're hungry, are you; well, I am the same.
If you are famished, my small friend, look here,
Here is some bread and cheese, and here's some beer.
Four pieces. One I take. The other three
Are yours. Oh! this is quite enough for me.
(He has divided a hunch of bread into four parts—
three very small and one very large, which he keeps himself.)

Dumpy. Oh, generous stranger! Noble-hearted youth!
I am a sort of genius, that's the truth.



CYMON.

JANETTA.

Perhaps you thought I was; p'raps you've been taught
'Tis oft the fate of Genius to be short.
I'm a magician. Now, for your three dishes,
I'll grant you—anything you like—three wishes.
Name them.

I want a bow. When I shoot game at
The bow must hit whatever I may aim at.
Go on.

I said a bow, don't be alarmed
If I demand a fiddle.

Oh, I'm charmed!
So must the fiddle be, that when I chance
To play a tune all listeners shall dance,
Except the folks who hold on by my skirt.
Granted. What next?

Well, one more will not hurt.
I ask but this—whatever the request
That I shall make, in earnest or in jest,
Whoe'er I ask shall grant it.

Grant—hey—what!



DUMPY THE DWARF.

MARQUIS DE MINCEPIE.

Yes—if he can.
No, if he can or not.
You have your wishes (*opens his bag*).

There's the bow, and there's
The fiddle. Won't he give himself some airs!
Good-by, young man.

Your name before you're off.
I'm Slumpy Dumpy, the Deluvian Dwarf.

DUET.

No thanks, my boy, to me, to me,
But go away with your wishes three,
And your fiddle de dee,
de dee.

Cymon. My fiddle de diddle de diddle de dee!
You're very kind,
'Tis hard to find
A man of six foot three,

Who'd give to me
A fiddle de dee,
And grant me wishes three!

When you play,
Then none can sit.
When you shoot,
You'll make a hit.



ROBERT AWUNNER.

JOE GRYNDON.

Dwarf.

Or if the birds were in London town
Without a penny you'd bring 'em down.
Thanks to you—no thanks to me.
How jolly I'll be
Wit, my wishes three?
So jolly! oolly! so jolly! so jolly!
With my fiddle de diddle do dee! Ah!
[*Exeunt separately, singing and dancing*

SCENE III.—The Borders of a Wood. A large tree is seen in the midst of a thick bush. Music. Enter GRYNDON with a sack full and a spade.

GRYNDON. This sack is full of money. For my daughter,
Thinking that Cymon's gone across the water
And left her—so we told her—has consented
To wed the noble Marquis. I'm contented.
The Noble Marquis has paid down all this
By way of dowry for my little Miss.
And now, though no one knows it

[Confidentially to audience] I'm a miser.
I hide the coin and nobody's the wiser.
I'll use that hollow tree, till I have sunk
A hole. P'raps 'tis a box-tree—hero's its trunk.

Music. Enter CYMON.
Now, with my spade, I'll dig a hole bran new.

[They meet face to face. Chord.]
Hallo! Sir! who'd ha' thought o' seeing you?
What are you doing there?

Cymon. GRYNDON (confused). Well, Cymon, I
Seeing a little bird to suit a pie—
It's on that branch—thought, p'raps, that I might
get

Cymon. GRYNDON. It down somehow—and that is how we met.

Cymon. GRYNDON. I see the bird. I'll shoot it.
But take care
The last time that you shot you are aware—
Ahem! There is a little bird, a thrush;

Cymon. GRYNDON. He's singing lovelily above that bush,
Shoot it. I'll give you sixpence.

Cymon. GRYNDON. (Aside) Silly duffer!
I'll get ten shillings for it from a stuffer.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Here goes! (Fires.) The bird is down. Now the reward.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Sixpence! So much I can't indeed afford.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Then the bird's mine.

Cymon. GRYNDON. It's fallen in the bush, I'll go and get it.

Cymon. GRYNDON. [He disappears in the bush]
Ah! bright idea!—now a tune I'll play,
And he must dance until I make him pay.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Can't find the bird. No nest. No eggs.

Cymon. GRYNDON. [The fiddle begins slowly, and he begins moving.]
Hallo! Hii! what's the matter with my legs.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Ho! stop your airs—Bellini's and Rossini's—

Cymon. GRYNDON. My joints are getting like a fantoccini's.

Cymon. GRYNDON. The thorns are in my shoes—do stop your squeak—

Cymon. GRYNDON. My clothes are tearing—bran-new suit last week.

Cymon. GRYNDON. [He is now dancing wildly.]

Cymon (still playing). Give me your daughter.

Cymon. GRYNDON. No.

Cymon (still playing). [He plays wildly and GRYNDON dances.]

Cymon (still playing). (Jumping, shouting.) No! I mean yes!

Cymon (still playing). Give me two thousand crowns.

Cymon (jumping and dancing). I ac—qui—esce!

Cymon. GRYNDON. Give me—now smile, and do not look so blackly—

Cymon. GRYNDON. Whatever's in the sack.

Cymon. GRYNDON. No!

Cymon. GRYNDON. [He plays furiously, and GRYNDON is in agony.]

Cymon. GRYNDON. Yes! Ex—sackly!

Cymon. GRYNDON. Now you may go.

Cymon. GRYNDON. [GRYNDON disappears, and CYMON takes the sack.]

Cymon. GRYNDON. A fortune! Dear Janetta!

Cymon. GRYNDON. [He shows the sack, full of coins.]

Cymon. GRYNDON. I'm rich!

Cymon. GRYNDON. [GRYNDON appears, his clothes all torn, and himself the picture of misery.]

Cymon. GRYNDON. I hope you feel a little better.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Better! I'm ill. You've got my coin and papers.

Cymon. GRYNDON. (Aside) I'm like boiled mutton, done to rags, with capers.

Cymon. GRYNDON. But I will be revenged.

Cymon. GRYNDON. You send your daughter;

Cymon. GRYNDON. And also for this sack you'll send a porter.

Cymon. GRYNDON. (servilely). Oh, anything for you, o' course, young mister.

Cymon. GRYNDON. (Aside) My turn will come; but, oh! that was a twister.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Enter JANETTA.

Cymon. GRYNDON. (Aloud) Ah! here she comes.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Janetta!

Cymon. GRYNDON. Dear Cy—mon!

Cymon. GRYNDON. [They run into each other's arms.]

Cymon. GRYNDON. (aside, maliciously). All right. Beware, young man.

Cymon. GRYNDON. I'm off! I'm "on!" [Exit.]

Cymon. GRYNDON. Now all this money, dear, belongs to both—

Cymon. GRYNDON. To you and me. Your father wasn't loth

Cymon. GRYNDON. To yield to my request; in fact, he "jumped at it;"

Cymon. GRYNDON. He jumped, in fact, so high, he got quite pumped at it.

Cymon. GRYNDON. And now we'll marry, and be very happy,

Cymon. GRYNDON. And spare a little for my poor old pappy.

Cymon. GRYNDON. Re-enter GRYNDON, leading on MARQUIS, and TWO CONSTABLES, unperceived by JANETTA and CYMON.

Cymon. GRYNDON. We'll take a little house down by a brook,

Cymon. GRYNDON. Live on the bank, and by our banker's book



CARVING CROSSES FOR PILGRIMS AT BETHLEHEM.—DRAWN BY W. J. WEBB.

"FRENCH SHEPHERDS GOING TO CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS."

In some countries religious ceremonies may be more imposing, but in none are they more impressive to the sympathetic, than in France, especially in the more Celtic and neighbouring districts. There the imaginativeness characteristic of the Celtic race is found in, perhaps, the highest degree. And there also is found to prevail that concomitant sentiment of pious devotion which, degenerating as it may and does into superstition, is still the natural outcome of an ardent enthusiastic temperament. The imaginativeness of the rustic French is all the more intense, perhaps, because it does not take the direction of effervescent hilarity, and does not confuse grotesquely the actual relations of things, as is the case with the humorous Irishman. The clouded skies, and humid, stormy climate of Brittany, for instance, seem to produce no reactionary influences, but only to render the inhabitants more sad and earnest. The virtues which distinguish this peasant-people are, as might be expected, of the more serious sentimental kind—such as loyalty, attachment to the soil and to the race, with its legendary lore, to old customs and even costumes, which in some regions are still those of the seventeenth century.

It is, however, as regards religious observances that many of the rural districts of France seem to be most conservative—to have, as it were, scarcely emerged from the Middle Ages. A short time back we gave an Engraving, after a famous picture by the eminent painter Jules Breton, representing one of the religious processional ceremonies called a "Pardon," which, for the fervour of the processionists and spectators, could hardly be matched in Europe.

Now, opportunely to the season, we give an Engraving from a picture representing, in a more northern part of France, a scene which is not less significant of popular faith—faith in the Gospel narrative as well as in Church tradition and power. As our readers partake of the indoor pleasures of a festival which we keep socially more than religiously—as a sort of English carnival, in fact—it may be salutary to turn a thought to the peasantry of unhappy France, many of whom will, at the moment of our fullest merriment, be making their way in grave procession, at "noon of night," through snow and biting winds to the village church, there to celebrate by solemnest mass the advent of the Divine Shepherd. The way Mr. Thom (an American artist, pupil of Edouard Frère) has treated this striking subject in the picture (which was in the spring exhibition of the New British Institution, is worthy

of warm praise. Admirably truthful is the effect rendered of a frosty midnight, with the moon at the full. Excellently expressed is the diffusion of the moon's rays as they dapple with a ghostly glory the fleecy canopy of clouds, and hang suspended in the silvery mist that shrouds the distance, and glisten on the thick rime that with myriad crystals whiten every blade of grass; and all this pallid blueish brilliance is effectively contrasted by the yellow glow of the lantern and its reflections from the foremost figures, from the ewe, decked with flowers, trotting contentedly beside its gentle shepherd masters, and the lamb—the firstling of the flock—borne so tenderly by the processionists on these occasions as an apt type of the spotless Lamb of Bethlehem. All the figures of the shepherds and their families are introduced and treated with equal propriety. Old and young of both sexes are there chanting their Christmas carols; little children who have not long learnt to walk, and an aged woman too infirm to reach the distant church on the hill without support on each side, fall in the ranks of the procession, as well as the maiden tall and erect, and the sturdy man of middle life; and all, be it observed, are equally devout, equally intent on attending the solemn midnight Christian service, which has been performed from time immemorial.

T. J. G.



FRENCH SHEPHERDS GOING TO MIDNIGHT MASS.—PAINTED BY J. C. THOM.

He's to be shot at once, with his own bow.
Cymon. Oh! Bow-street magistrate.
Marquis. Be off! Go! go!
Verses, Quartette, and Chorus.
 MARQUIS, GRYNDON, JANETTA, CYMON, AND CONSTABLES.
Cymon. Oh, cruel fate! The verdict is unjust.
 Why kill me like a fowl? You see I'm trussed.
Janetta. Let me be trussed with him.
Cymon (aside to her). Oh, trust to me,
 And I will yet regain my libertee.
Marquis and Gryndon. Away! away! We will not hear a word!
 The sentence, the sentence, shall not be deferred.
Janetta and Cymon. In pity, stay.
The Others. He must away!
 Shoot him, shoot him,
 Shoot him through the head!
 Then when he's killed
 He'll be as good as dead.
Cymon (plaintively). One last request I'll make, you'll take

My life, my life, 'tis true,
 But grant me, oh! before I go,
 My last request—oh, do!
 What is it? Say.
'Tis, may I play
 The fiddle?
Gryndon. Nay.
Marquis. I say he may.
Gryndon. But do you know?
Marquis. I'll have it so.
Cymon. Unbind his arms.
Cymon (playing and singing). Give me the bow.
 Lay hold of my coat. [JANETTA does so.
 Now, with the first note,
 Although dance music I never wrote,
 Yet now you will see,
 While they listen to me,
 That all will dance to my fiddle de dee.
 [Different movements. All gradually dance faster and faster.

All (except CYMON and JANETTA). Ho! Hi! Stop! Ho!
 Don't! Do! Stop your bow!
 Its magic! It's awful! It isn't a dream!
 It's a fast train!—express!
 Hi! we're going by steam!
Cymon. Stir you pegs.
All. See their { legs.
Oh! my {
We are { bewitched, sure as eggs is eggs.
Cymon to Marquis. Give up Janetta!
Cymon. Say I'm not guilty.
Marquis and Gryndon. And that, too.
Cymon. The money you gave me is mine for life.
Gryndon. It is, it is.
Janetta. And I'm his wife.
Gryndon and Marquis. You are, you are! Oh, stop, do stop?
 Or down in a fit we'll both of us drop.
 [CYMON makes a very rapid and fast finish. They all drop exhausted.]

FINALE.

Moderato.

CYMON.

Now, as a fai-ry tale always ends (De-spite all ey-ni-cal laughter), They went and were married, and feasted their friends, And happily liv'd e-ver af-ter, Eat pies and plums, for

PIANO-FORTE.

Christmas comes, we know, but once a year! To great and small, to short and tall, We wish the best of cheer, And a mer-ry Christmas to you all, And a hap-py bright New

rall. Allegretto.

Year. A mer-ry Christmas to you all, And a hap-py bright New Year. A mer-ry Christmas to you all, And a happy New Year may there be. Play games of chance, And

colla voce. f CHORUS.

join in a dance; for care is all Fiddle-de-dee, . . . all Fiddle-de-dee, . . . All Fiddle-de-dee. A dee. . . . (Repeat CHORUS with dance.)

LOWTHER ARCADE AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

As Christmas approaches, broughams and cabs may be seen at the principal toy-marts pouring out groups of excited boys and girls, who presently return with their arms full of playthings and the oddest articles which the ingenuity of man can devise and the wealth of parents and friends can buy. The boys are mostly laden with warriors armed cap-à-pie, drums, trumpets, blunderbusses, and grotesque, horrid-looking demons, which grin and roll their eyes in the ghastliest manner; while the young ladies, as becomes the gentler sex, generally choose what is graceful and dainty, having keen eyes for the useful as well as the ornamental. Besides the host of miscellaneous articles in the carriage, a majestic rocking-horse is sometimes borne off on the roof; in which case one of the boys is with difficulty kept from mounting on its back, and so riding in triumph through the streets. Every now and then an eager face is thrust out of the open window to see that the prize is safe. At this season, too, the omnibuses which pass the toy emporiums—Cremer's, the German Fair, Lowther Arcade, and the like—frequently contain two or three children, full of half-suppressed excitement whose audible whispers, as they inquire of mamma or aunt if she is quite sure they have not passed the place, make known their destination to all. And surely it must be like a glimpse of fairyland to children when they first pass up a glittering avenue such as that of Lowther Arcade—an Aladdin fairy palace—crowded with all the glories and wonders a child's fancy can conceive. What to choose in such a wealth of pretty, fantastic, and ingenious things must be a great difficulty. How is it that children are not kept, by the mere force of counter-attractions, in a state of perpetual suspense? On the right, perhaps, a darling of a doll attracts a young lady not yet in her teens, while on her left she is fascinated by a well-filled, resplendent workbox. How is she to decide between

them? How, too, is that bewildered lad to choose which he shall bear away—the hideous dwarf that on one side rolls his head so oddly, and glares so bewitchingly, or the wonderful conjuror that on the other side plays such hanky-panky tricks? One is rather surprised that they are not riveted to the spot, prevented by the counter-charms from choosing either, as the fabled donkey was starved to death between the two bundles of hay, being so equally drawn to both that he could not take a bite of either. But the choice is made, and that right speedily—some infinitesimal element of preponderance on one side, a jerk, it may be, of mamma's hand, or a hasty reckoning of the ways and means, settling the point.

It was my good fortune, quite recently—as it has been, I suppose, of all grown to man's estate, either for relatives' or, better still, for their own—to have the charge, in part, of a family of boys and girls bent on a toy-purchasing expedition. Our destination on this occasion was Lowther Arcade. When I reached their house, I found all the children ready equipped and frantically eager to be off. But Miss Julia, a fair-haired, gushing pet of about ten, must first tell me her dream, which, somewhat shortened, ran thus:—"Well, you know I was locked into the Arcade, and remained there all night—at least, I dreamed I was. While I lay crouched in a corner looking at the different toys, on a sudden they became alive, and began playing leap-frog with each other. Such a game they had, to be sure! As I watched them, half frightened, half amused, a beautiful Princess, with the pinkest of cheeks, the bluest of eyes, and the softest flaxen hair, came to me and begged the favour of my company at a tea-party with her and the ladies of her court. With the most gracious air, she escorted me to a part of the arcade where a number of lovely ladies (I knew they were dolls, you know) were seated around a table, having in its midst a Christmas-tree, blazing with ten thousand lights, and all sorts of

presents nestling in its branches. The dolls rose and made their obeisance, like good-mannered ladies, at our approach. The Princess having taken the chair of state, placing me on her right hand, the dolls began to chat away on a variety of topics. But whilst we were thus pleasantly engaged a great clamour arose. All the soldiers had taken side, either as Germans or French, and, having forced many others into their ranks, were drawn up in battle array. Suddenly trumpets sounded, fifes squealed, and drums beat to the charge. At the same time some stupid bats and owls, startled, I suppose, by the noise, flew to the Christmas-tree for refuge, and put out all the lights. So with the noise and fright I awoke. Now, wasn't it a curious dream? and wasn't it a pity that I woke so soon?" "No," jerked out practical-minded Jack, her eldest brother; "it wasn't curious at all. You had been thinking of toys and dolls, and so you dreamed about them. There is nothing wonderful in that. And here you have been keeping us, listening to your foolish dream, when we are all ready. Come on!" With that we started. What amount of money was laid out I cannot take on myself to say. I know that the boys pulled me here and there, as different objects struck their fancy; and that Julia saw the very doll, the Princess, she had seen in her dream—so she whispered to me—and of course it was bought, the page (who was already laden with a Noah's ark, a reticule, and other articles) having strict charge to bear it safely to the carriage; also that the identical Christmas-tree that lighted the dolls' table—I had Julia's word of honour for it—was bought, and with great trouble placed on the carriage-roof; and that, on our return, the carriage contained, besides ourselves, elephants, pannier-donkeys, white-woollen poodles, windmills, hoops, skipping-ropes, battledores and shuttlecocks, trumpets, drums, accordions, workboxes, and a host of other nicknacks.

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Sir CHARLES LOOCOCK, Bart., M.D., F.R.S., F.R.C.P.
Sir WM. FERGUSON, Bart., F.R.S.
Sir J. RANALD MARTIN, F.R.C.S."

Also recommended by—

Sir C. GIBR., Bart., M.D., LL.D.
T. H. TANNER, M.D., F.L.S., &c.
J. RUSSELL REYNOLDS, M.D., F.R.S., F.R.C.P.
C. R. RADCLIFFE, M.D., F.R.C.P.
A. CLARK, M.D., F.R.C.P., Physician to the London Hospital, &c., &c.

PULVERMACHER'S SYSTEM is also approved of by an official report of the Académie de Médecine, Paris, of which the following is a brief extract:

"The Voltaic Chains of Mr. Pulvermacher are really a most wonderful apparatus. It is astonishing to see these little pads adapting themselves to the form of the body, and capable of producing under their small volume the most surprising effects. . . . They unite two advantages which no other apparatus has hitherto possessed: they are more portable, and cheaper, two indispensable conditions in any apparatus of this description, in order to make the application of electricity more general, and to a certain degree, power, which is certainly very desirable in the interest of patients, as well as that of the profession. In this respect the Voltaic Chain-Bands will have a great future. The Committee beg to propose to the Academy to address their thanks to Mr. Pulvermacher for his most interesting communication. Adopted."—*Bulletin de l'Académie, Tome XVI, No. 13.*

THE INVENTIONS have been approved in like manner by the Royal College of Physicians, London; the Imperial Faculty of Vienna; and the Academy of Medicine, New York; and their curative virtues are confirmed by thousands of private testimonials of cures effected. (See Pamphlet gratis.) Extract of a testimonial by Dr. HANDFIELD JONES, F.R.C.P., F.R.S., Physician to St. Mary's Hospital.

"I have seen some of Mr. Pulvermacher's inventions for the application of the continuous electric current to the human body in various disabled states. I am satisfied that he has laboured and earned his place in the field of the science, and I think that he deserves to meet with every encouragement from the profession and from scientific men."

These facts appeal to the good sense of every sufferer to avail himself of this scientific and curative progress, to which the inventor has devoted a lifetime of study and labour, as an ardent disciple of that great benefactor of mankind, the late illustrious electrician, Michael Faraday.

THE TESTIMONIALS following (as well as the far more numerous ones contained in a pamphlet which can be had on application) representably afford a small proportion of the cures actually effected, the particulars of which have not been communicated. This will be evident, in view of the extreme reluctance of the inventors to have their names and sufferings made public.

It should be explained that many of the cases (the results of which are written in the third person) have been communicated by the patients' friends. Cordial commendations from the most eminent British and Foreign medical authorities, together with confirmatory statements in standard works, such as Persson's "Materia Medica," Dr. Tanner's "Practice of Medicine," Dr. Handfield Jones on "Nervous and Functional Disorders," &c., may always be seen at the Establishment, No. 200, Regent-street, London, W.

NERVOUS DEBILITY. (Testimonial.)

6, Glasshouse-street, Regent-street,
"June 1, 1870.

"I have been suffering from the effects of nervous debility for fifteen months. Symptoms—Weakness of the eyes, great debility, depression of spirits, weakness of the back, &c. After using your Volta-Electric Chain Bands for three weeks, I find myself much better in every way—strength and general condition of the body much improved, and all the symptoms that worried me so much disappeared."

"L. D.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

EPILEPSY. (Testimonial.)

"23, Eillesmore-road, Victoria Park,
"London, April 27, 1870.

"I have very great pleasure in bearing testimony to the value of your Volta-Electric Combined Bands. I have been suffering from epileptic fits ever since I was seven years old. I was determined to try your Bands, and, thank God! I am able to say that in the eight months I have worn them I have only had two slight attacks; and I believe, from the improvement in my constitution, I shall not have any more. I have great reason to be thankful."

"CHRISTOPHER COTTON.
"P.S.—My age is now 39, and I am enjoying good health; previously I did not know what good health was, owing to the number of fits I had, which had a dreadful effect on the nervous system."

"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

NERVOUS DEBILITY. (Testimonial.)

"Someford Keynes, Crickdale, June 21, 1870.
(Extract.)

"I received a Volta-Electric Belt from you in December last, which I have worn according to the directions. My nerves are a great deal stronger than they were previous to wearing the Belt. Digestion is better, and the bowels act more regularly, &c."

"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

RHEUMATISM and NERVOUSNESS. (Testimonial.)

"Wooton Bridge, Isle of Wight, March 23, 1870.

"The young man for whom you sent the Combined Chain wished me to write to say he is better. I beg to say, also, that I saw and conversed with him this morning; he looks evidently better. The effects produced are as follow:—The patient sleeps better and easily. The pain in the leg is also better, so much so that he can swallow his food, which before gave him great pain. He is less irritable, can bear the touch of a person near him, &c."

"RICHARD ALFORD.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

INDIGESTION of LONG STANDING. (Testimonial.)

"131, Regent-street, London, W., Dec. 21, 1868.

"Sir.—My avocations having been of a sedentary nature for many years must have been the cause of great disturbance to my digestive powers; consequently, I suffered dyspepsia, more or less, with all its horrid symptoms, for twenty years. After trying various remedies, I became totally prostrate and incapable of any exertion, when I was induced to wear one of your Belts, and I attribute my restoration to health entirely to that circumstance. I have now left it off, and can eat and drink anything as well as when I was a boy. This is saying something, at the age of fifty-six. With best wishes and gratitude to you, I have the honour to be, yours, very faithfully,

"P. A. BARNARD.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

RHEUMATISM and STIFFNESS of the JOINTS. (Testimonial.)

Wateringbury, Oct. 11, 1870.
(Extract.)

"Sir.—In reply to your favour of the 10th inst., I am pleased to say the party has found great relief from your Galvanic Band, and has constantly worn it as directed, &c.—I am, Sir, yours truly, "W. SANDERS.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

NERVOUS DEBILITY and GREAT WEAKNESS. (Testimonial.)

"Coleshill-street, Eaton-square, W., Oct. 6, 1870.
(Extract.)

"Dear Sir.—After two months' application of your Volta-Electric Appliances, I have to report as follows:—I am improved since I last wrote you a good deal, and power restored.—Yours respectfully, "N. J. B.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

RHEUMATISM. (Testimonial.)

"Lynton Lodge, Croydon, Sept. 10, 1870.
(Extract.)

"Dear Sir.—Will you kindly send me Chain Band, to be worn on the arm, &c. . . You will be pleased to hear that the first one sent has done great things for a rheumatic arm; within a week's time there was marked improvement.—I am dear Sir, Yours truly,
"E. B. SHULDHAM, M.D., M.R.C.S.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

PARALYSIS and AFFECTION of the SPINE. (Testimonial.)

"Bushbrooke, Bury St. Edmunds, Sept. 15, 1870.
(Extract.)

"Dear Sir.—I feel it a duty I owe to society to make known, through the medium of your pamphlet, the great benefit your wonderful Volta-Electric Chains have been to me. I have been suffering with an affection of the spine, and been confined to my bed fifteen months, during which time I could just get up in my bed to the sofa. I sent for your Bands, but soon wore them continually, and can now walk down a long garden; my hip was also slightly paralysed; so that I could not use my leg; but I am most grateful and thankful to say that has quite recovered. If you would send me some pamphlets I think I could do the cause still more good, there being several round here. I should like to introduce the subject to; and, having received so great a blessing myself, I should wish others to do likewise. You are at liberty to make what use you like of this.—I remain, your respects, "GEORGINA S. NASH.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

SCIATICA. (Testimonial.)

"Rohais, Guernsey, Oct. 18, 1870.
(Extract.)

"Sir.—I have found benefit from your Volta-Electric Chain-Band for Sciatica, &c.—Yours truly, "H. OXFORD.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

NERVOUSNESS. (Testimonial.)

"Ipswich, Oct. 19, 1870.

"Dear Sir.—I have had one of your Volta-Electric Bands from Mr. Seager, and found it most effectual.—Yours truly, "JNO. R. RIDLEY.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

SCIATICA. (Testimonial.)

"Midhurst, Sept. 7, 1870.

"Sir.—I am happy to be able to report to you that a few days' application of one of your Volta-Electric Chain-Bands to the side of the thigh has proved very effective in relieving the Sciatica from which I was suffering.—Yours truly, "W. F. ELGIE.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

GENERAL DEBILITY, LOSS OF APPETITE. (Testimonial.)

"15, Devon-place, Newport, Mon., Sept. 10, 1870.
(Extract.)

"Sir.—I am happy to say that the Volta-Electric Belt I sent for some four months ago, has been of great service to Mr. Brewer, in removing the morning sickness and improving the appetite.—Yours truly, "M. R. BREWER.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

RHEUMATISM AND SCIATICA. (Testimonial.)

"35, Talbot-road, Bayswater, Sept. 27, 1870.

"Sir.—I beg to acknowledge the efficacy of your Volta-Electric Chain-Bands. I have been suffering from a severe attack of sciatica for twelve months. For six months I was quite lame and confined to my room, and by the advice of a friend of mine I placed a Volta-Electric Chain-Band, and am happy to say, after wearing it two months, the pain has left me, and I can walk with perfect ease and comfort—I remain, Sir, yours truly, "S. S.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

PARALYSIS. (Testimonial.)

"White House, Hasland-road, Chesterfield.
March 16, 1870.
(Extract.)

"You will think I am a long time before I acquaint you of the result of your Bands. When I stated my case to you, I had very little confidence when you said if I could grasp anything with my hands there was a chance of recovery. I could not raise myself up in bed at that time, but now in my right arm and the muscles on my right side the pain has vanished down the spine and right side, &c. If you choose to make any use of my name you are quite at liberty."

"GEORGE WILSON.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

SCIATICA. (Testimonial.)

"H.M. Dockyard, Chatham, July 29, 1870.

"Permit me to contribute my mood of praise for your invaluable Patent Galvanic Chain-Bands. I was suffering with a severe attack of sciatica for about five months, accompanied with great lameness. I applied your Belt as described, and in about twenty-four hours I had lost all symptoms of it, and up to the present time (about seven weeks) I have had no relapse. I shall feel great pleasure in answering any inquiries to those that may require one, &c."
JOSEPH RIDOUT.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

RHEUMATISM in LEG. (Testimonial.)

"Rodborough, near Stroud, Gloucestershire,
March 17, 1870.

"I am very glad to inform you that I have had more freedom of movement than last three weeks when I have had for the last three years, for which I am very thankful. By wearing the Chain-Band constantly it made my leg warm and comfortable."

"A. BIRT.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

NEURALGIA. (Testimonial.)

From the late Mr. Charles Dickens, of Gadshill-place, Higham-by-Rochester, Kent:—

"June 3, 1870.

"On the recommendation of Mrs. Bancroft (Marie Wilton), who assures me that she has derived great relief from a similar complaint by the use of the Galvanic Bands, he will give it a fair trial."

"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

RHEUMATIC GOUT. (Testimonial.)

"Bitchfield, near Grantham,
Lincolnshire, July 10, 1870.

"The Galvanic Chain-Band that I sent for has quite cured the young person of the rheumatic gout, which she has been suffering from for three years, and has been to all doctors of the time, but without obtaining relief. She could not walk across the room without being in danger of falling. Now she can walk seven miles to-day, and did yesterday, and is quite well to-day. Hoping you will make it public for the sake of other sufferers, with many thanks."

"THOMAS TAYLOR, jun.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

NERVOUS DEBILITY. (Testimonial.)

"High-street, Odham, Hants,
Aug. 16, 1870.

"I have much pleasure in stating I received the Chain-Band you kindly forwarded to me last week, and am happy to inform you that I have found great benefit from its use. The debility I was suffering from was considerably relieved by the use of your Chain-Band, and I am now quite well again. I have no appetite much improved. I write this in hopes that others afflicted with the same dreadful disease may be induced to try your Chains, for I can never feel sufficiently thankful for having obtained such a remedy."

"Believe me, your faithfully,
CATHERINE H. BOSTOCK.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

INDIGESTION. (Testimonial.)

"6, Upper St. Giles-street, Norwich,
April 12, 1870.

"I have found great relief from using the Electric Belt you sent me in November last. My digestion has much improved, and I do not now suffer from those pains in my chest which afflicted me so much during the past four years."

"J. MANN.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

TIC DOLEUREUX. (Testimonial.)

"27, Pen-street, Boston, Lincolnshire,
March 1, 1870.

"I have cured several cases of the doloureux by the application of your Voltaic Flexible Chain Battery. You can refer anyone to me you like about your treatment, as I believe it to be very effectual."

"J. B. LANES.
"J. L. Pulvermacher and Co., 200, Regent-street, W."

NEURALGIA. (Testimonial.)

"Strathalton-crescent